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THE LAST PLAGUE OF EGYPT,
THE GERMAN GLADIATORS,
GREAT KING HEROD,
AND OTHER POEMS.

*A Metrical Medley of Original Pieces,
WRITTEN AT VARIOUS TIMES, FOR THE AMUSEMENT OF THE
AUTHOR'S CHILDREN,
AND ALSO FOR GENERAL READERS.*

BY THE

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'SUNDAY REFLECTIONS ON CURRENT TOPICS,' ETC.

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TO
HIS WIFE AND CHILDREN,
THESE FEW PAGES
ARE
AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED
BY
THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

“GOOD WINE,” says the well-worn proverb, “needs no bush.” In like manner, a book that tells its own story sufficiently, requires a preface of very moderate dimensions. The writer is by no means of the opinion that the purpose of language is the concealment of one’s thoughts. Language is the mirror of the mind. In proportion to its clearness does it reflect the thoughts of the speaker, or writer, to the readers or listeners, with greater or less distinctness. Much pains have therefore been taken to make the following pieces as intelligible as possible. Many of them have been, for years, a source of amusement to the author’s children. He trusts that they may now prove acceptable to a wider circle of readers. As for the author himself, they have beguiled many an hour, when severer work was prohibited. He trusts that any possible tinge of melancholy which may perchance cling to some of them, may not prove altogether distasteful to his readers. As to others of a lighter character, the only palliation for their publication may be found in the fact that they would be sadly missed by those for whom they were originally written, were they omitted from this “metrical medley.” They have long been, with many others not herein contained, as *Household Words* in the family circle.

LONDON, *November*, 1879.




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THE LAST PLAGUE OF EGYPT.

HE anxious sun went down beneath the sands
Of queenly Egypt, whilst foreboding sighed
The chill spring breezes ; and the dubious sky
Flashed with an orange glamour streaked with black—
Impatient darkness waited to begin,
Eager to pass away a night of doom
That would be lurid with the Last sore Plague—
Against that weird, that awful, gruesome light
Which glared behind them like the kindling flush
Of conscious guilt, the Pyramids stood out,
Yes, and the stubborn Sphinx till sunrise dumb ;
Whilst whispering palm-trees waved aloft their arms
As if to “hish” away from coming death
All wayfarers, all simple travelling folk—
Palms, Pyramids, and Sphinx they all stood out,
They all awhile stood out in black relief
Before that fearful orange-coloured sky !

* * * * *

The kindly arms of dimness soon embrace
The stately fanes of Luxor and Carnac—
From lake and stream, from seething cataract,
The snow-white ibises and pelicans,
The red flamingoes have long since flown home
To their moist, reedy lairs beside the Nile.
No sound is heard along the fertile banks

Of Father Nilus save the foamy plash
 Of crocodile, or mouseing screech-owl's hoot,
 The croak of bull-frogs, or the gusty sighs
 Of the lone night wind wafting to the moon—
 As though she listened—the weird evening chant
 Of dusky oarsmen paddling to their huts
 Along the sedgy creeks, and thickets dense
 Of rank papyrus. So the night wore on—
 Yes!—All was dark except the starlit sky.
 Yes!—All was dark, save where the glimmering lamp
 In some lone lattice on the river's side,
 Told of love's vigils by the couch of pain,
 Or by the feebler lamp of fading life—
 Yes! It *was* dark—Pithom and Raamses,
 Great Egypt's treasure cities, all were still.
 Thebes, hundred-gated Thebes was hushed in sleep;
 Alone the watchful sentinels' slow tread
 Was heard before proud Pharaoh's palaces.

* * * * *

As we have told, accustomed night had stilled
 The roar of cities and the breezy hum
 Of village life, in Egypt's fertile land—
 Yet, at that hour when king and peasant slept,
 The glare of tapers from the casements gleamed
 Of slumb'ring Pharaoh's shrewd prime-minister,
 And flashed upon the obelisks outside,
 As though the curious flame would seek to read
 Some hint, some presage that had shadowed forth
 Egypt's sore Plagues in stone-cut hieroglyphs.
 Jannes,* first minister of Egypt's king,
 And first magician, held high converse with
 Jambres his brother cheat, and chancellor
 Of Rahab, that is Egypt's treasury.
 "I was at prayers to-day," Jannes began,
 "In yonder fane, and thus I heard a man
 "Address the image of his patron god"—

* 2 Tim. iii. 8.

THE PRAYER.

Plague upon plague, that mystic three times three,
Nine plagues have smitten with successive stroke
Our Fatherland, long envy of the world ;
Have ruined thousands—scattered to the winds
Long years of patient avaricious thrift !
On the exchange our merchant-princes wince,
So many first-rate houses have succumbed.
Folks say those wretched Hebrew curs again
Have been a-praying (Curse the slaves, ye Gods !)
To their “JEHOVAH,” Maker, so they boast,
Of heaven and earth, and e’en of Holy NILE—
Oh, Great Osiris ! I am sore perplexed—
Speak, speak, Osiris ! Great Osiris, tell,
Will the tenth Plague of which they talk so much
Slay all the Firstborn ?—

“ So he maundered on ”—

I HAVE ONE SON—Oh, say it is not true !
I won’t believe it !—Nay—I want to know
Why we, in vain, before thy image bow ?—
Speak up, misshapen stone !—Hast thou no tongue ?
I charge thee answer as thou art a god !—
No word ?—No hint ?—No sign of sympathy ?—
Speak up !—Speak up !—Thou misbegotten dolt !
Explain why thy sleek priests accept our gifts—
Jannes and Jambres—(These—yes !—These, I mean—)
Accept our presents firstlings of our stores,
Gold, silver, jewels, “offerings,”—so they say—
To thy Divinity !—Osiris ! Wake !
Base, slumb’ring stone, awake, and tell me why
Those nine sore Plagues have gutted Egypt’s land,
And why myself, thy constant worshipper,
Am threatened with the loss of all my slaves ?
I gave them straw, when I, at last, found out
That bricks could not be made without *some* straw—

Osiris !!—Oh, Osiris !!!—Tell me why
Those clownish slaves—those Hebrew herdsmen talk
Of one more Plague, and now are almost free ?——

Oh, brutish God !!!—No more sweet cane I'll bring—
No more frankincense—till I understand
Why Jannes shrinks, and Jambres trembles so
When Moses speaks, and Aaron waves his rod—
I think—yes—I dare say it—Yes! I think
Jannes and Jambres are infernal cheats,
And Egypt's gods will get the worst of it !

* * * * *

"Did he say so ?!!" shrieked Jambres to his chief,
"Art thou Grand Vizier? Wilt thou tolerate
"Such treason ?—Gods !—The man must be put down—
"Just send and fetch the villain from his bed,
"The headsmen soon——

"Hist ! Jannes, what is that ?
"What is that piercing scream ?—There 'tis again !—
"Oh, Gods !

"IT'S MIDNIGHT !

"Hark !
"The screams !—The screams !
"From every house !—The city is alive !
"Look out !

"Look out !
"The city is alive—
"Look out !—Look out ! A hundred torches flame
"In the full streets——

"The last sore PLAGUE has come !—
"I too have got *one* son !

"Oh ! Jannes, don't !—
"Don't turn so pale—

"Thou art Prime-Minister !—
"Thou must do something——

"Order out the Guards !"—
Jannes turned sick, and swooning murmured out——

"Do what?—Do what? Oh, Jambres, save *my* son!"

* * * * *

The Plague had come indeed—unmarked by men,
God's Angel had come down amidst the gloom,
And lighted on the highest Pyramid—
The evening star went out when his bright sword
Flashed from its sheath. Awhile the angel paused,
And then spread out his wings and slowly flew
Down from his height, as though his awful eyes
Would pierce into each cranny and each nook
Of Egypt's every house! He sailed along
And marked e'en slave-girls who had got a son,
A firstborn son, and where He passed he died—
Even the flocks and herds were not exempt.
Not Pharaoh only, but his sheep and kine
Sent up a moan of grief and wild dismay—
No hut, no stable where was not one dead!

Oh, what a night was that in Egypt's land!
The frightful tidings spread, and men rushed forth,
And frenzied women dancing with despair,
Into the roadways shrieking, "Shut your doors!
"Bar up your windows!

"Keep the Angel out!

"Jehovah walks abroad!

"We're all dead men!"

Swift messengers afoot tore through the streets,
In chariots flew, on swifter horses rode
To fetch the medicine-man in magic skilled,
To fetch the leech to heal the Firstborn slain.
A chariot stopped before great Jannes' door,
And as it stopped one foaming horse fell dead,
Whilst a daft mother rushed inside the house,
Tearing her hair, and crying, as if possessed,
"He shall not have him! He is only mine!
"He shall not have him! He's my only son!
"Come, Jannes! Come with me and save my son!"—
She spoke to Jannes but she did not mark—

She was distraught, and so she did not mark
 That Jannes sat stone-dead upon his chair
 Clutching the body of his only son !

* * * * *

That very night the sons of Jacob marched
 With wives and little ones, with flocks and herds,
 Marched out of Egypt—Pharaoh's slaves no more ;
 God set them free—Their servitude was o'er !



THE GERMAN GLADIATORS.



IN the arena deathlike silence reigned !
 Yes, deathlike silence, for upon the sand,
 The blood-soaked sand, lay palpitating yet
 The hacked and mangled corpses of brave men ;
 Fierce Teutons, sons of Germany, lay there,
 Once, in their forest lairs, the rivals keen
 And stalwart slayers of the boar, the wolf,
 The shaggy bear, and deadlier wild cat.
 Brave, savage captives—there they stiffening lay,
 Their clotted flaxen locks all intertwined ;
 Their massive left hands on each other's throats,
 The right still clutching trident, sword, or club !

Yes ! Silence reigned. The fight had been so keen,
 So fiercely mighty, betwixt man and man—
 And countless couples fought that bloody day—
 The battle was so keen that Roman maids,
 And Roman matrons yet sat quite transfixed
 With eager interest in the horrid sport,
 And quite forgot that they were interested
 In the success of those they'd bet upon.

Yes—Roman maids and matrons were so dazed,

The fight, the struggle, it had been so sharp,
So far beyond what Cruelty had hoped,
That Avarice itself was thrust aside,
And no one asked who'd lost, or who had won ;
The greatest loss were cheap at such a sight !

The Roman beauties were completely dumb,
The spectacle had been so wonderful—
Those fair-haired savages had died so hard ;
None claimed her bet—She was too much inflamed
By the grand show, the horrible pastime—
Yes, none had won, and every bet was lost,
Because the fighters all were dead alike.
It was a stirring struggle ! Each fair face
Had flamed with fury, or grown pale with rage,
As she beheld her favourite go down.
But now the glut of blood defeated gold—

The last two men had only just succumbed,
And brazen Beauty had not realised
That all her bets were lost—

But to resume :

In the arena deathlike silence reigned !
A surfeit of delight reaction brings ;
So still it was, that women's throbbing hearts
(Oh gems, how falsely shrined !) might e'en have heard
Their pulses beat, their life's blood eloquent
With lust of pain that drove out love of gold,
With joy at seeing so much human woe.
'Twas frightful silence, like the pause which storms
Make 'twixt each blast. And from the deep-scarred sands
Of the arena, on the bloody steam
Which the fierce sun drew up from their own gore,
The fretted, furious souls of murdered men
Compelled to kill each other for the sport
Of Roman "ladies"—Heaven forgive the word !—
Were mounting slowly to Walhalla's halls.
'Tis lunch-time now—the real feast comes yet.
Hist ! How the trumpets blare—gates wide are flung ;

And men and horses all caparisoned
In circus glories ('Tis a play, you know!)
Come tearing in, and tossing up the sand
Of the arena save where drenched with blood—

'Tis but a moment, and the hook is fixed
In some poor German's body—then away!

The garish cavalcade whirls swiftly out,
And then returns to drag away some more.
And so it comes and goes till none are left.
The ladies are at lunch; they do not look
At such displays. By Jove, they are too tame!
The doors are shut. No valiant eyeballs glare
Glazed with the gloze of death, at that fair crowd
Of chattering Loveliness which talks again—

But lunch is over. The Falernian's quaffed;
The empty wine cups for small odds are chucked
Down from the boxes by voluptuous hands
At the red spots where such and such men died;
Hits are to win, but misses they must pay!

The arena's empty—but new sport begins—
Again the hinges of the portals creak,
And through the doors are thrust an unarmed crowd
Of Christian martyrs—men and wives, and babes;
Then with a mighty thud the doors are closed,
And as the echo travels round the mob,
A savage shriek of ecstasy breaks forth,
"Now for the lions!" "Let the tigers loose!"

For now behind the several massive doors
From whence wild beasts are goaded forth to fight,
Is heard the savage scream, the frantic yell,
Of Indian tigers starved to make them fierce:

The furious roar of black-maned lions from
The Lybian deserts whets the appetite
Of the accomplished audience for fresh blood.
"How fierce they seem!" each rosy mouth exclaims,
"We *shall* have sport! Look how those children clutch

“Their mammies’ garments. Oh ! ye gods, prevent
“The dear wild beasts from killing them too soon.
“Those Christians are the foes of human kind—
“The world’s worst foes.”

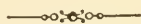
And what a world it was !

But yet we see that even that world prayed—
’Twas scant they knew of God’s great fatherhood ;
But yet these Pagans felt there was a God.
’Twas Christ’s to teach men truly how to pray ;
And why ? Because He taught men how to love.

One moment more—the iron doors fly ope—
Tigers from these, lions from those swarm forth
With blinking eyes beneath the August sun ;
The laggards driven out by flaming pitch :
And then the portals of the dens are closed.
They fain must fight, because there’s no retreat.
The audience rises, stands upon tip-toes,
And drowns the roar of beasts with one vast cheer !

Each other first the rival monsters spy,
And straightway leap in furious bounds across
The wide arena, sniffing up the blood,
The too fresh blood of those poor German braves.
And then ensues a devilish whirligig
Of beast round beast, each raving mad for blood ;
A carnival of hate, like fiends that vie
To drown each other in Hell’s boiling tides,
All sore tormented by the fiery surf,
Yet rising on the crest of each red wave,
To rend and tear, to buffet, and to spit
Hot maledictions at each fiend they see.
And then is seen the helter-skelter chase—
The headlong charge—the furious wrestling match.
Again the sands are scarred, as each lithe brute
Pins down his rival, or leaps nimbly by
’To roll and roll next moment in the sand—

The boxes cheer no more—They're too absorbed—
 They hold their breath—The beasts alone are heard :
 The horrid snap of gleaming, dripping fangs,
 The crunch of breaking bones—the piercing screams
 Of disappointed rage, as beast borne down
 By stronger beast, yells vengeance forth, and rakes
 His adversary's ribs with twitching claws—
 The strangled growls of royal tiger choked
 By lion's giant grip upon his throat—
 Or lion's stifled howls before he dies ;
 Until at last, when weary of the fight,
 At which the women are in tears of joy,
 The grim survivors of the bestial strife
 Spy the poor Christians—Then the fun,
 The business of the day begins at once.
 They lash their heaving sides, all sweat and gore,
 And with exulting snarls make for the prey !
 Great God of Love !—Is this what Science, Arts,
 Without thy Gospel, taught poor human hearts ?



GREAT KING HEROD.



T WAS in the days of Great King Herod's reign—
 " Herod the Great " folks dubbed him. We prefer
 To call him " Great King Herod"—great in crime,
 In lust, and cruelty and every sin—
 Great in vain-glory—that enchanting fault,
 So odious in self-seeking, foppish men,
 But which in woman makes her try to please,
 Unconscious that all hearts were long since won ;
 Churls call it " vanity," but men adore
 The winsome self-respect that yet would charm—

Which, like the sunbeam, gladdens every one,
But ne'er forgets that it was sent by God
To purify the earth, as well as cheer.
No cloud of fragrance would go up to heaven
At early morn, except the flow'rets waved
Their golden censers, conscious of their grace,
And softly wooed admirers to look on.
All goodly women * have a looking-glass
Within their hearts, which shows them half the truth.
They see they're fair, but know not how divine—
True loveliness is always musing how
To be more lovely—Is this Vanity ?
All know how females of a certain type,
Pert, fly-blown slatterns far more wise than nice,
Scowl at a match-girl with a pretty face,
And always count frank kindliness a sin.
But men are juster—They more fairly judge
That honest Nature rarely does by halves
What she has will to do. A comely face,
A shapely form, bespeak a gentle soul.
But we have quite digressed—We pardon crave—
Our theme was Herod and his worthy deeds——
'Twas in the days of Great King Herod's reign,
Fit prototype of bluff, wife-slaying Hal—
Half man, half goat, sagacious Edomite—
Folk say, a satyr after Herod's death—
“Demise” we should have said, if quoting from
The *Morning Post* of those punctilious days—
Folk say, a satyr with a pimpled face,
Pot-bellied, bloated, of unsteady gait,
Oft prowled about fair Cæsarea slums ; †

* By the word “goodly” the writer would allude to, he cannot define, that unselfish graciousness which Divine Goodness has assigned to woman, in ample compensation for physical strength which is man's prerogative. His is the lot of labour. Hers is the joyful ministry of consolation.

† Herod the Great adorned and beautified Cæsarea at great expense, and in the style of Pagan Rome. The orthodox Jews abhorred all heathen innovations. The “sect of the Herodians” were free-thinkers who acquiesced in these tokens of modern civilisation.

The face was Herod's, but the spectre's legs
 And cloven feet at once proclaimed the fiend
 A ghostly chip of hairy Esau's block.
 Yet Esau made it up with Jacob, and forgave
 The mess of pottage, though he'd sworn to kill
 His crafty brother, when blind Isaac died ;
 Hot Esau fumed when Jacob got clear off
 To his long exile in the Syrian land ;
 "After those days" the brothers met again
 And Esau's hearty grip made Jacob wince ;
 They met to kiss, and talk about old times !
 But the Great Herod, though of Esau's line,
 Out-Esau'd Esau in his savage hates,
 His dark suspicions, and undying grudge.
 He ate men's pottage, sat at their brave boards,
 And gormandised till he could hold no more,
 Then, when the cloth was drawn, and "*Grace* was sung,"
 And the Judæan Harker * cried aloud
 "*Pray fill your glasses !—Silence for a toast !*"
 Herod looked pleased—He knew *his* health came first ;
 He knew his trembling host had well prepared
 A mess of flattering lies dear to the king !—
 —Suppose a case—King Herod sits half-drunk
 (The Tyrian sailors called it "half-seas-o'er"),
 Sits crowned with flowers at a Levite's board,
 Who was Lord Treas'rer of the "Den of Thieves,"
 A very millionaire, but did not shrink
 To pocket now and then a widow's mite,
 But yet a very influential man—
 The halberdiers pace up and down outside,
 The lifeguards walk their horses to and fro,
 The house and streets are bright with colour'd lamps,
 And gay transparencies provided by
 The smug contractor of the *Board of Works*,

* Mr. Harker is the well-known "toastmaster" to the City of London. His stentorian voice and special experiences make him a *sine quâ non* at civic feasts. He stands behind the Lord Mayor's chair, and proclaims each toast in due order.

The royal carriage waits—the horses champ
Their jangling bits, and paw the dusty ground ;
The King's state-coachman puts a tankard to
His thirsty lips, and hands it back well drained
To an Egyptian " Jeames," all tags and plush,
And with a most portentous gold-topped cane.
A rabble-rout of larking men and boys,
And frowsy women pass their time in " chaff"
And rowdy horse-play—real " Philistines,"
Waiting to see " Great Herod's" coach drive off,
And mock the " awficers," who cry " Move on !"
Until some livelier varlet gets locked up—
Here lounge a knot of Moabitish sheiks :
There a rapsallion thief from Jericho,
With his hard shrewish wife now first in town,
Stands gaping on—She leans her head upon
Her dirty hand, almost with toothache blind ;
Her husband grins, and with an oath exclaims,
" You've learnt at last, old girl, to hold your jaw !"
The gentle reader doubtless will forgive,
That we translate the slang of those queer times ;
'Twill charm Max-Müllerites to know the source
Whence costermongers have derived the phrase—
But to return to that brave banquet-hall—
The " Loving cup" has passed, dessert is on :
The host stands up endeavouring to be brave,
And Herod cocks his ears and forward leans—
'Twas Herod's custom to destroy his hosts
If they seemed rich—But yet the host stands up,
And smiling, says, although his husky voice
Clings to his jaws—" My Lords and gentlemen,
" Here's to our King !—Our gracious Sovereign Lord,
" Whose kindly deeds are known throughout the world ;
" Deeply I thank him, condescending Prince,
" For honouring to-night this humble board !"
And yet the sneak, he trembled for it now,
Was a repeater of the trite *bon-mot*,

“The very pigs in Herod’s royal sties
“Are to be envied before Herod’s sons!”
Augustus meant to say, the swine would live
Till they were fit to kill, but Herod’s sons
Lived on from day to day in fear of death.
Forgive!—We left the Levite on his legs;
We need not add the rest. He thus concludes,
“My Lords and gentlemen, upstanding drink,
“*With three times three*, benign King Herod’s health!”
Benign King Herod, with pleased, tipsy nods,
Acknowledges the toast, and then drives back
To his self-widowed home—Ye Gods! How so?
“Self-widowed?”—Yes—his chaste, most beauteous wife
Lies stark and dead—The executioner’s
Hard, callous gripe is printed on her charms;
Her snowy arms and neck are black and blue—
Last night they slew her—Yes—the hangman’s hands
Last night destroyed her; for her jealous lord
Was drunk, the sot, and fancying her false,
Raved out the warrant for her instant death!
The deed was done—dead Mariamn  lay
As yet unburied, for affection feared
To pay the last sad office to her dust!—
After some days the Great King Herod had
A sober interval, and knew his loss.
Beast that he was, his Mariamn ’s smile
Was the one charm that drove his fiend away.
But now the devil crept up to his side
As soon as he got back from that grand feast;
He scarce had donned his flowered dressing-gown,
Before his slaves had put his slippers on,
Ere he had time to sip his custom’d glass,
His fiend, his own familiar cruel fiend,
Crept to his side, and mockingly began:
“The King’s alone—I humbly audience crave—”
King Herod waved him off, the demon hissed,
“I will be heard!—Nay—put not up those hands—

" See how they drip with Mariamn  s blood !
" There is thy kerchief—wipe them, or thy robe,
" Thy dressing-gown will be unbearable—
" I thought the King was scrupulously neat—
" Mariamn   made it—Come now—be a man—
" I'll not torment—Let's choose another theme—
" Hast thou forgotten that the Jewish lord
" Who gave thy health to-night is very rich,
" Is popular—and dangerously rich ?
" But Great King, harkee !—he's a traitor too,
" Didst not thou notice he left out the toast
" Of '*Queen and Royal Family* ! to-night ?
" And yet it was perhaps excusable,
" Because thy murdered Queen lies stark and dead.
" But for all this, the bungler might have framed
" Some dext'rous, happy toast all full of jokes
" At which the craven guests perforce had laughed ;
" Although those lying Newspapers are full
" Of how Mariamn   'struggled with the brutes
" 'That quenched the fairest light of Judah's land.'
" And then they add, as if to spite the King,
" ' His Majesty, considering his loss,
" ' Has borne up nobly and his health is good ' !
" Canst thou forgive the lord ? A well-turned jest
" Oft, for the moment, puts aside the shaft,
" The envious, poisoned shaft of outraged Truth
" When the mob laughs, ill-humours are forgot :
" That Jewish Cr  sus might have tried the trick,
" Although his voice had stuck within his jaws—
" He did not do it—don't pass by the slight.
" Then think how rich he is ! Dost thou love gold ?
" Ha ! blood and gold are the delight of kings !
" Remember too he is a nervous man—
" Didst thou not mark how all his muscles twitched
" When he proposed thy health ? Brave subject he
" For red-hot pincers, or the thumb-screw's nip !
" Send for him now, and bid thy friends in masks,

"With leathern aprons and strong, brawny arms,
 "To bring their tools ! It will divert thy thoughts ;
 "And, better still, a good example make.
 "For things look serious, and as I came in
 "I heard a ballad-singer in the street ;
 "She sang a plaintive ditty, whose refrain
 "Called on the daughters of Jerusalem
 "To weep for Mariamn   foully slain,
 "The last princess of Asmon  ean line !
 "A crowd stood round her, grim, but all in tears,
 "And though a brave centurion ran his sword
 "Right through the wench, the furious mob at once
 "Disarmed the man, and kicked him till he died !
 "Now, *Down with Herod ! Kill the beast !* they cry,
 "In every street of fierce Jerusalem !
 "Farewell, Great King—think over what I say.
 "Thou know'st the Jews ; they are a ticklish lot.
 "The stinging-nettles must be firmly grasped.
 "Make an example. Cr  esus is thy man !"——

* * * * *

Benign King Herod took the kindly hint.
 He fetched the Jewish lord—the torturers
 Were ready in the room when he arrived !
 Suffice to say that Herod fell asleep
 Lulled by the dying groans of his poor host ;
 But when he woke, there Mariamn   stood,
 And by her pallid shade the mocking fiend,
 Who pointed to her throat, and jeering drawled,
 "The evening papers impudently say,
 "'There'll be no luck about the house henceforth !'"

* * * * *

That horrid fiend, until the dying day
 Of "Great" King Herod, never left his side,
 And closed his eyes when he blaspheming died !*

* The descriptions of the Herodian period in "The Life and Words of Christ," by Cunningham Geikie, D.D., are worth perusal. The book is in 2 vols., and was published in 1877 by Henry S. King & Co. It is splendidly got up, and printed in a clear, bold type. See especially vol. i. pp.48, 49, for the murder of Mariamn  .

PAID IN COPPER.

A TRUE ART-STORY OF OLDEN TIME.



NE of the Masters of that godlike art
Which paints on canvass all that men have seen,
Or dreamt and fancied, and not only that,
But limns the fluttering Soul of Poesy,
The Sunbeam-Spirit of ideal grace
Which flits round homely things, and lights them with
That subtle rainbow loveliness which comes
But once to cheer us in the self-same form,
And, if not caught by painter's instant wit,
For ever melts away like sunset's clouds.
One of the masters of that God-like art
Was by Lord Abbot and his holy friars
Retained to paint their Chapel's altar-piece.

He did the work, and did his task so well
That all who see it, yet are awe-entranced,
Although delight o'ermasters wondering awe.
He did his work, and sent his bill—it was—
Well, say, two hundred ducats, but the churls,
The holy churls, refused to pay the score.
Their heirs won't take ten thousand ducats now,
Because the picture is of priceless worth.
They went to law, Lord Abbot and his monks,
But they were "cast," and had to pay the bill.
And *how* they paid it! That's the ghastly joke,
A devil's masterpiece of cunning spite.

* * * * *

All history tells—Europe's cathedrals tell
How culture thrrove in those dark days of yore,

In cloistered cells. How Art alone survived
 Those hurly-burly times, in quaint retreats
 Where the recluse could undisturbed design,
 Or patronise such miracles of grace.
 So—there were monks “and monks,” and Abbots too ;
 Those whom we tell of were not quite the best.

* * * * *

They wrote a letter, and the letter ran—
 “To-morrow, Caitiff, thou mayest come and fetch,
 “At midday, that which, by the quirks of law,
 “Has been awarded thee—It will be paid !
 “But, if a moment after twelve o’clock,
 “Lord Abbot will not see thee—Then he dines ;
 “So tramp betimes, for August suns are hot,
 “And thou hast far to come, and far to go,
 “But curs like thee are always fleet of foot !”

The painter came. For several leagues he trudged
 Along a dusty, blazing, treeless road,
 To fetch his money in the August sun !
 He was too poor to ride, so walked perforce,
 And, as the hour drew on, strained every nerve,
 And stood exhausted at the Abbot’s door.
 There was no inn—the Abbey’s buttery
 Alone could furnish needed meat and drink ;
 But yet the holy fathers let him stand,
 Without a drop of water or a crust,
 And cracked small jokes, yes, very little ones,
 At the poor great man’s evident distress.
 With such weak gibes, fiends “out on holiday,”
 Mock suffering saints, endeavouring to forget
 That “sharp to time” they must be back in hell !

And so it was with those malignant friars.
 They kept him standing long, insulted him,
 And when he’d signed the bill, the porter brought
 Two hundred ducats all in copper coin,
 Tied up in sacks ; which first they made him count,
 Not once, but five times, for they mixed the heaps

Of wretched pennies he had counted out,
That he might have his work to do afresh ;
And then they bade the porter push him out,
Crushed with the weight of those accursed bags,
Into the glare of that fierce August sun !
In vain he asked them "for the love of God "
To let him rest, and buy a cup of wine.
Lord Abbot cursed him for his impudence,
And bid the fevered wretch a tavern seek.
"Yes! Sirrah, harkee," cried the holy man,
"What is dispensed at this religious gate,
"Is given in charity, but never sold.
"The Black Plague* take you, sot! you are half-drunk,
"I see it in your gait and blood-shot eyes."——
In vain he craved that he might sit awhile
Beneath the trees within the Abbey's grounds—
They spat upon him—he was bundled forth
Outside the gates, into the blazing sun,
To limp those weary leagues with those curst bags,
Gasping and faint, upon his blistered feet,
To the bare garret where he used to paint.

Lord Abbot and his monks had reckoned well—
The fever struck him on that frightful tramp!
He tottered home—his wife, at their poor door
Just as he fell, received him in her arms,
And laid him on his bed—his bed of death——
In three more days he slept within his grave!
Was it malignant fever—Doctors tell!—
Or curst Malignity, that robbed the world
Of a great genius who had just begun
To leave his mark upon the Scroll of Time?
Yet, Christian folk, when of your charity,
For souls in purgatorial fires you pray,
Be not Lord Abbot and his monks forgot ;
They still are there, and find it very hot!

* See Hecker's "Epidemics of the Middle Ages." *Lond.* 1844, 8vo., transl.
by Dr. Babington.

ABSENCE.



HE captive linnet in its cage
 Pours forth unceasingly its strains,
 As though its very voice must break,
 Or with its pathos burst its chains!

The denizens of sunny climes
 Sing languidly of flowers and sun ;
 Surfeit of too much changeless bliss
 Enchantment's self has oft undone !

The heart of man is far too small—
 Wider than empires though it be—
 To vibrate always to the touch
 Of ever-present ecstasy !

No ! Absence from the things they love,
 The stranger land—the climate rude,
 Kindle the fairest dreams of home
 In exiles in their solitude !



STORMY SUNSET.



N wrathful red the sun went down
 In silence, to his resting place,—
 Like troublous thoughts, grey streaks of cloud
 Passed slowly o'er his angry face.

Hot stillness reigned,—The voiceless glare
 Was eloquent with coming storm ;
 Thin vapours hovered in the sky,
 Of every quaint, fantastic form.

And yet the cloudlets sailed away,
The threatened tempest seemed to pass ;
The stars shone down upon the sea,
Reflected as in looking-glass.

But hist ! far out from sea, a moan
Comes sweeping o'er the ruffled tides—
In one short hour the hurricane
In giant might, unbridled rides !

Then was the skipper glad who'd marked
The angry sun's prophetic frown ;
His ship was safe in port that night,
When many a gallant bark went down !

MOONLIGHT.



VENUS now is swiftly setting,
Peerless star of early night,
But the moon the world is flooding
With her own most wondrous light.

'Tis as though with molten sapphires
Dewdrops glittered on the grass,
With a silvery sheen flashed in them,
Blue as heaven, yet clear as glass.

Tell me, O my soul, what is it
In the moonbeams, that they seem
Not alone to light, but quicken,
With their pale, translucent gleam ?

Why so like a glorious pathway
Gleaming down from Heaven to men,
Whilst good angels, on its brightness,
Come and go, and mount again ?

Yes ! oh, yes ! I've often seen it,
 When the air seemed paved with light,
 And the whispering tread of spirits
 Echoed softly through the night!



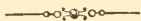
SPRING MORNING.



GLITTERING mist hung o'er the fields,
 Soft sunshine bathed the landscape fair,
 As though the golden dust of Heaven
 Were floating in the warm spring air.

The radiant mist was like a veil
 Which maidens wear, yet not to hide
 Their loveliness, but to enhance
 With mystery, their beauty's pride.

Too exquisite to last, the morn
 Soon ripened into perfect day,
 And with its dream-dispelling light
 The dim enchantment passed away !



LONDON BRIDGE.



LIVING waves, O London Bridge,
 Roll along thy granite ridge ;
 Ceaselessly they ebb and flow,
 As the turbid Thames below,
 To and fro, from shore to shore,
 Oscillating evermore.
 Now in sluggish shoals they drift,
 Now like weaver's shuttle swift—

Throbbing pulse of London life !
Artery with commerce rife,
Bridge of turmoil, bridge of sighs,
Bridge of twice ten thousand cries ;
Bridge of business, bridge of tears,
Viaduct of hopes and fears,
Weary grows the brain, and reels,
Listening to thy hoofs and wheels !
How shall pen, in outlines dim,
Hope thy changeful scenes to limn ?

When the lamps are bright, and day
Groping through the twilight grey,
Wakes the weary artisan,
And the snoring husbandman,
Then thy living tides begin
Rolling, sweltering, tumbling in !—
Ringing on the pavement damp,
First is heard the workman's tramp ;
Teeming swarms of labouring men
Flocking come, to toil again ;
Men who follow out-door trades,
Men with hods, and men with spades,
Men with wallets on their backs,
Can in hand, and shouldering axe ;
Stalwart navvies carrying tools,
Bricklayers with plumbs and rules,
Painters, smiths, and carpenters,
Masons, paviours, plasterers.
Men with blunt, ungainly ways,
Smoking short, discoloured "clays ;"
These the footpaths overflow,
Whistling blithely as they go.

Fish-cart, butcher's cart, and dray,
Carts of cabbage, carts of hay,
Milk-carts filled with jingling cans,
Railway-waggons, Pickford's vans.

Dust-carts, coals, and timber wains,
Hansoms to the early trains ;
Royal mail, and news-carts fleet
Block the bridge, and fill the street ;
Thus, with ceaseless stream and straight,
On the current flows till eight !

Swifter then the tides set in,
And their serried waves begin
Like a cataract, to grow
More resistless as they flow,
Sweeping on in wild turmoil,
Wood and stones, and clay and soil ;
Fed by tributary rills,
So thy seething channel fills—
Business men, whose faces wear
Furrows deep of settled care,
Ticket-porters, merchants' drudge,
City swells with gentish trudge ;
Messengers and lawyer's clerk,
Shop-girls flitting to their work,
With a myriad more unite,
Surging swiftly out of sight ;
Thus the stream keeps rolling on,
Till the hour of nine is gone.

Then in very sooth begin
Forenoon's bustle, strife and din !
Could a man the grains of sand
Count upon the ocean strand,
He the mixed and medley tribe
Might sufficiently describe,
And the moving myriads tell
Swarming in to buy and sell,
Or the vehicles portray,
Passing all the livelong day—
Doctor's bustling equipage,
Gracechurch Street, and Clapham stage ;

Brompton 'bus, and "*Favourite*,"
"*Citizen*," and dog-cart light,
Chariots drawn by spanking bays,
Broughams drawn by blacks and greys,
Mildewed cab, and Hansom smart,
Costermonger's donkey cart,
Nobby "tandems," four-in-hands,
Ethiopians and brass bands ;
Men on horseback, men on foot,
Newsboys, sweeps, and bags of soot ;
Beggar's brat and millionaire,
Women dark, and women fair,
Women dingy, women clean,
Cotton prints and crinoline ;
Women splendid, women neat,
Ankles trim, and sluttish feet ;
Punch and Judies, acrobats,
Nigger minstrels with white hats,
Dog-stealer and burglar fell,
Pens and spectacles to sell,
Pickpocket and well-dressed thief,
Seedy tradesman come to grief,
Glacé silks and satin's sheen,
Broadcloth, fustian, velveteen,
Life-guards, linesmen, grenadiers,
Pensioners and volunteers,
Foreign seamen, British tars,
Cripples, wooden-legs, and scars,
Negroes, Turks, and Polish Jews,
Spaniards, Portuguese, Mossoos,
Yankees, Yorkshiremen, and Paddies,
Arabs, Welshmen, Highland laddies,
Russians, Germans, Refugees,
Danes, Norwegians, Cingalese,
Walking-sticks, and orange girls,
Penknives, pencils, and false pearls,

Dog-collars, and dancing Jacks,
Jewelry and French gimcracks,
Meerschaum pipes and mild cigars,
Plaster casts, tobacco jars,
Best fusees and smuggled shags ;
Sponges, combs, and oiled-silk bags,
Mingled shadows, mingled lights,
Mingled smells, and sounds, and sights
All confused, with wild fanfare,
Stun the senses, fill the air ;
Such the torrent, London Bridge,
Flowing o'er thy granite ridge.

Such ! ah no, this is the spray,
Foam that shines to melt away,
Veiling with its rainbow wreath
Darker floods that roll beneath ;
Bubbles these, one moment bright,
Ripples fading out of sight,
Surf upon the billows' crest,
Empty show and vain unrest !
Black unfathomed deeps there are,
Deeps unplumbed by sun or star,
Deeps that to each other cry,
Sweltering waves of misery,
Restless deeps that aye declaim
Trumpet-tongued of death and shame ;
Dullard man looks on, nor hears
Sounds that ring in angels' ears !
Yes ! O London Bridge, the lost,
Hopeless, wan, and tempest-tost,
Famished, sick, oppressed with care,
Countless forms of woe are there !

See amidst the heartless whirl,
Yonder pale, not graceless girl ;
She was once her father's pride,
Nestled at her mother's side,

Shame has made her now his own,
 Friendless, homeless, and alone.
Innocent ! no more she fears
 Drunken gibes, or brutal jeers ;
Delicate ! her only dread,
 Want of shelter, want of bread !
 See that palsied workhouse crone,
 Affluence was once her own !
 Here are infants driven forth
 Till they beg a "quartern's worth,"
 Infants reared to want and sin,
 Trained to steal the price of gin ;
 Seamstresses who walk the street
 That their orphaned babes may eat.

Lo ! here comes the nodding hearse,
 Stretcher'd martyrdom, far worse,
 Accidents and suicides,
 Corpses hooked from Thames's tides,
 Drunken shouts that rend the air,
 Undertakers' men that bear
 Noakes's shell, or velvet box
 Silver-gripped for richer Cox ;
 Strapping constables that hail
 Shrieking women-kind to jail ;
 Rowdy brawlers, liquor-blind,
 Maudlin brutes with drink grown kind ;
 Such thy understreams that run
 Evermore, from rising sun,
 Till it sets, again to rise,
 London Bridge, thou Bridge of Sighs !

ALL ROUND THE CLOCK IN THE TROPICS.*



OW wane the stars, and sultry night
 Prepares to flee away :
 The eastern sky is streaked with light,
 The saffron flush of day !

Brighter and yet more brightly burns,
 With fiery glow, the air ;
 Each sated beast of prey returns
 To his dim forest-lair.

With stealthy tread the leopards seek
 Their den, in jungles deep :
 The jackall and hyæna sneak
 To pass the day in sleep.

List' to the elk's deep-throated bark
 Receding to his glade !
 The elephants, in forests dark,
 Regain their sylvan shade.

One moment more, and daylight breaks
 In flaming red ; behold,
 The trembling mists, like writhing snakes,
 In volumed coils are rolled !

Each leaf, and fern, and blade of grass
 Is spangled o'er with dews,
 And gossamers, like threads of glass,
 Shine with prismatic hues.

* See Sir E. Tennent's "Ceylon."

A dancing cloud of butterflies
Flit forth into the sun,
And beetles of metallic dyes
Amidst the damp leaves run.

First of the birds, the early crows,
With cranes and parrots, soar
From inland nests, where rivers flow
Down to the seagirt shore.

Loud crows the jungle-cock, and, hark,
The flute-voiced oriole !—
Grass-warbler, bulbul, jocund lark,
Their tuneful carols troll.

Bronze-wingèd pigeons softly coo
From brake and leafy bowers ;
The eager-fluttering sunbirds woo
The coyly opening flowers.

In circling wheels, the swallows glance
Above each pool and stream,
And burnished insects swarm and dance
In morning's fiery beam.

Thus teems the early air with life,
Until the sun is high ;
Each clod and grain of dust is rife
With new vitality.

Apace the sun grows hot and high,
The living swarms retreat ;
Falcons and kites to sweep the sky
Aspire, on pinions fleet.

The elephants with fanning leaf
Noon's ardours seek to cool ;
And buffaloes have sought relief
Immersed in lake and pool.

From bough to bough the squirrels leap,
The monkey chattering springs,
The dragonfly abroad doth keep
Alone of living things.

Fiercer and yet more fiercely gleam
The noontide's early rays,
Until the crisp blue air would seem
With liquid fire ablaze.

Palsied each leaf, and mute each breath,
Untraversed lie the plains!
In flaming might a living death
O'er prostrate nature reigns.

The dreadful calm no sounds awake,
The beasts and birds are still,
Save tortoise plashing in the lake,
Or chirp of cricket shrill.

Each copse and leafy haunt is filled
With creatures seeking shade:
In solitude the fields are stilled,
And mute the sultry glade.

Prone on the ground extended lie
The panting dogs, and men
Resign their tasks, and languid sigh
For night's reviving reign.

O deathlike peace! O doleful heat!
O wished-for night's return!
The fluttering heart is heard to beat,
The vocal pulses burn!

* * * * *

Now fades the noon.—The creatures wake
From their meridian trance;
Nature revives—o'er bush and brake
A myriad insects glance.

To watercourse and pool the herds
Slow saunter forth to drink :
Awake to life the drooping birds,
And man to work and think.

And, as the orb of daylight sets
Beneath each distant hill,
Discordant troops of paroquets
Each tope and palm-grove fill.

The crows beside lagoon and lake
Are pluming for the night,
Sea-birds and pelicans betake
Themselves to inland flight.

Now sinks the sun, and twilight brief
Falls on the drowsy plain,
Evening descends, and brings relief,
Till day returns again.

On whirring wing the hawkmoths fly,
As fall the shades of night,
The snoring beetle brushes by
In short, uncertain flight.

The glow-worm shines on herbage damp ;
By fits, the brilliant spark
Of fire-fly, like a waving lamp,
Gleams out from foliage dark.

The orange-trees and jessamines
Sway languidly above,
And whisper to the curious winds
The story of their love.

And flaming through the village trees
A thousand lanterns glance,
Whilst mingled sounds float on the breeze
Of revelry and dance.

The vampire leaves his cobwebbed nook,
Their holes the owls forsake,
The night-jar skims the pond and brook
His insect food to take.

To life each forest-beast awakes,
Puts off the sloth of day,
His bristling mane the lion shakes,
And prowls in quest of prey !

A moving tumult fills the air,
Of strife and bestial fray,
As though the gate of hell were there,
And fiends kept holiday !

List to the wild dog's hungry bark !
The jackal's famished moan !
List to the leopard's roar, and, hark,
The dying zebra's groan !

Thus wears away the tropic night ;
Till darkness 'gins to wane,
And the glad east with morning's light
Is crimsoned o'er again.

Then fly the sons of spoil and death,
And fade the spectres wan,
Before the morning's perfumed breath,
Like magic talisman ;

As though the footfalls of the light
Were spells of potent sound,
By which the creeping things of night
In wholesome thrall are bound !

AUTUMNAL GLORIES.



AUTUMN is here! SUMMER has had his day,
And silvery mists obscure the morning sun—
All joys must die—But yet the queenly YEAR
Holds her last court in true imperial guise!
Oh! stately AUTUMN, dressed in crimson robes
Of royal majesty, and golden-crown'd—
Hang out thy banners!—See the forest kings,
Ash, oak, and maple don thy livery,
As though enthralled in splendid vassalage!—
Oh! heartless AUTUMN, gayest when the world
Folds her rent mantle round her, e'er she dies!—
Love's dreams may fade, and the stripp'd cornfields mourn
The loveless blank of hopes for aye cut down;—
No pity moves thee—no regrets disturb!—
Vain, lavish spendthrift!—thou art quite content
To reign in purple for thy little hour!—
For thee, the peach its downy sweetness gives—
For thee, the garden still its garlands weaves
Robust of hue, though gentler flowers are dead—
For thee, the gossamer its tearful pearls
Floats in sad homage, through the morning mist;
For thee, the vine its bloom-clad clusters yields—
All men contend to praise thy ripened charms
Far more voluptuous than Summer's prime!
Ah me! for those on whom no AUTUMN smiles,
Whose hopes too early sown too soon are reaped—
The heart's broad fields, where golden promise springs,
Bear no more fruit, but fallow lie for aye,
Where Disenchantment's cruel scythe has passed.
Seed time is over—Harvest comes no more,
Though flaunting AUTUMN would herself the scene
restore!

SQUIRE TOUGH;

OR, BURIED ALIVE.

T was a solemn scene in Blank churchyard
 When Squire Tough the wealthy bachelor
 Was laid to rest, in his strong manhood's prime !
 His death had come with joyful suddenness
 Upon a circle of expectant friends.
 'Twas known, some years, that he had made a will,
 And distant kinsfolk, in their carriages,
 Flocked to the funeral in poignant grief—
 Of course the "County People" all sent theirs.
 The sad cortége extended half a mile.
 Oh ! how "impressively" the Vicar read,
 So said the Papers, and so well they might ;
 He'd been the Squire's dear familiar chum ;
 His college chum, and knew that he was left
 The fishing rods, the cob, a handsome fee,
 And *such* a precious bin of tawny port !
 But yet, he mourned for Tough with honest grief,
 He would not look upon his like again ;
 And how he missed him from the Squire's pew !
 For he'd just bought a batch of sermons from
 Millard * in Newgate Street—But now it was too late !
 The Heir-at-Law was there all bathed in tears,
 As rich as Cræsus now—but very mean.
 He'd given instructions for the funeral,
 And bid the sexton, Giles, who also was
 The undertaker, lay his kinsman in
 The very cheapest coffin he could make,
 Provided that the "box" would muster pass—
 "You'll get a brand-new velvet pall, of course,
 "And let US use it first," the miser said,
 "It will come in for other funerals,
 "But WE, you know, must look respectable !"

* A celebrated bookseller, now removed to 79, St. Paul's Churchyard.

Old Giles obeyed—He dared not disobey,
Nor forfeit in the *County Press* the puff
Which ran, of course, in these most flattering words,
“The Obsequies were feelingly arranged
“By MR. Giles, the well-known furnisher,
“And undertaker, of the Town of Blank!”

’Twas, as we said, a very solemn scene
Upon that soft November afternoon!
The robins sang their thrilling songs—The sun
Lit up the old church tower with mellow rays,
And peeped into the aisles, as if to read
The Epitaphs, which told how every one
Long years ago was “most respectable—”
The Vicar looked the pattern of a saint.
The Squire’s favourite pointer had stolen in,
And sitting by the coffin howled aloud,
And vexed the real mourners till kicked out—
The relatives “bereaved” of the deceased,
With bent-down heads, were touching in their grief—
Oh, yes, it was a spectacle for Holbein’s art!—
’Twas Holbein painted the weird *Dance of Death*—
Yet not for Holbein’s, but for Hogarth’s wit.
He could have painted in veracious tints
The gross hypocrisy of that smug crowd—
He could have caught, and on his canvas fixed
Priscilla Tough’s inviting, coaxing leer,
Whose eyes seemed on her Prayer Book so intent.
Yes! yes, the leer of Miss Priscilla Tough
At that cold, fishy, skinflint Heir-at-Law
Of Squire Tough’s, whom she had thrice refused.
Miss P. was rich. But *now* her wooer had
An income of ten thousand pounds a year
In acres broad, beside bare cash and plate
That quite made up three hundred thousand more.
Oh! how a legacy, a thumping legacy,
Knocks all aversion out of human hearts!
Well, well, we’ve done with Hogarth, he is dead,

And cannot paint the little comic scenes,
The overtures of peace made by rank foes
Who only thought of what perchance had fallen
Most probably, we'll say, to their *Bêtes noires*.
It is indeed a happy circumstance
That when a rich man dies he makes fierce foes
To love each other for a little time,
Until they know how he has made his will.
Great expectations are great peacemakers—
A monied "Quilp" a true Adonis is,
Xantippé rich is not a foul-mouthed frump,
And real gold has no unpleasant smell !

But we've digressed—All solemn scenes have end—
The mourners all drove off to hear the will.
The crowd dispersed—The town of Blank took tea.
Old Giles and "bandy George" the gravedigger
Went home to tea before they filled the grave.
Old Sexton Giles had been "much exercised"
To do the "proper thing" for scanty pay—
In fact he'd pawned his wife's best Sunday silk,
And his gold watch, and ancient silver spoons,
To "do it prime"—But yet, the County's eyes,
He fondly thought, that day were fixed on him
The Undertaker of rich Squire Tough !
Things had gone well, and so Old Giles asked in
The gravedigger, old "bandy George," to tea.
'Twas little Giles had earned—But yet he hoped
To be repaid by new celebrity—
They sipped their cups—Perhaps a little drop
Of "something good" was put into their tea,
By MRS. Giles, who was a thoughtful soul
And sadly was "afear'd lest Giles might catch
"Them bad rheumatics"—As for "bandy George,"
His crooked legs betokened he had had
"The wust rheumatics" since he was a child,
And so kind MRS. Giles prescribed for him,
To cure his pains, the same preservative

Which she compounded to protect her lord.
The muffins were well buttered—The poached eggs,
And well-fried ham were cheerfully discussed.
Until at last the Sexton said his "grace,"
And winked at "bandy George," and said "My man,
"We'd be ashamed to beg, but we can dig!"

They lit their lanterns, and they sallied forth
To the churchyard, where by the willow tree
The grave of Squire Tough yet yawned unfilled.
Each took a shovel, and they went to work—
But, agony ! Gramercy ! What a sound
Of anguished horror filled their frightened ears !
Strange, gurgling sounds, and cries for help came forth
From Squire Tough's unsealed-up sepulchre.
No wonder "bandy George" was sore afraid—
Yet he was only Undertaker's man,
And so cute Giles, at once, bade him go first.
"No man's a hero to his own valet,"
Napoleon said, at least so people talk.
So "bandy George" was thrust into the breach
Lantern in hand, and looked into the grave.
Great Heavens above ! Oh, what a sight he saw !
There was the coffin—But the lid of it
Was broken up, and through the ghastly chasm
Appeared a death-pale face and waving arm—
The face was frightful, but the gravedigger
Knew it was Squire Tough, or else his ghost—
To tell the truth, both took it for his wraith,
Or else an evil spectre prowling round
A Christian's corpse, in hope to catch his soul !
When Giles perceived that George had got no pluck,
He buckled on his courage, and peeped down
Into the yawning grave, but what he saw
Made his experienced undertaker's heart
With a new terror leap, nay, turn quite sick.
He whirled his shovel with a braggart shout
And flung it down at the poor Squire's skull !

The truth be told—Giles was in such a funk,
So blue a funk, he could not hit out straight :
He scarcely saw what he was aiming at.
He'd put out all his strength, and headlong fell
After the shovel, with a fearful scream,
Upon the coffin into that dread grave !
The Squire clutched him, and with whimpering voice
Moaned, "Don't you know me ? I am Squire Tough.
"Dont kill me, Giles ! You buried me to-day ;
"I am the man—Don't kill me, Giles, oh, don't !
"You buried me to-day !—Did I say so ?
"I've been asleep—How came I in this box ?
"Oh, do undo it, Giles—Please let me out—
"I'm weak—I've been so ill—Where am I now ?
"This dreadful hole can never be my bed—
"Just call the nurse to give me my beef tea !"

Old Giles's fall—He was a lusty man—
If truth be told, quite smashed the coffin lid,
And covered him with rattling, tumbling earth.
He screamed, and roared, and kicked, and said his prayers,
Then scrambled to his feet, and "bandy George"
Just plucked up heart to put a ladder down,
And like a squirrel the sexton tumbled up !

When once his weight was off poor Squire Tough,
He too sat up amidst the splintered boards,
Up to his waist in soil which Giles brought down.
Old Giles had felt his breath whilst in the pit,
Had felt his grip, and was just half convinced
He was no ghost, but real flesh and blood ;
And Sexton Giles was no unkindly man.
When therefore "bandy George," pick-axe in hand,
Drew near to give poor Tough his *coup de grace*,
Giles pushed him back, and stammered nervously,
"Come up, you sir !—You may come up this time ;
"I'll help you out. For I have got my fees
"For burying you—Yes, here they are, by Jove !"

He fished them from his pocket reassured—
His senses he had doubted, till the fees
He felt in coin, all jingling in his hand—
He had been promptly paid that afternoon.
The Heir-at-Law first cut him down as low
As meanness could—Then offered him to pay
Down on the nail—He knew that Giles was poor—
If he'd take off a further five per cent !
“Now I advise you, Squire,” old Giles went on,
“Don't try this game again, my jolly buck !
“Or, if you do, be sure all dues are paid,
“Paid in advance—Look at that shovel there !
“I'll not conduct a funeral for naught,
“And ‘bandy George’ will only work for pay.
“The graves he fills must only hold *dead men*—
“When next time you come here, if you're not dead,
“Take care the bill is settled in advance !
“You've got no money now ; it's willed away—
“Your friends might try it on—and you revive.
“If they refused to pay, Gravedigger George—
“Not I, of course—might knock you on the head,
“Just to make sure he'd get his proper wage.
“He is a very poor, hard-working man,
“And knows the Heir-at-law is dreadful mean.
“Look at that coffin !

“Was it suitable ?

“But thank your stars, the niggard bid me make
“That burst-up box of thinnest, cheapest wood.
“Why, bless you, sir ! you'd never have broke out,
“If you'd been buried like a gentleman !”
The honest Sexton thought—he did not *say*—
That when the Heir-at-Law next called him in
To bury Tough, he'd not be quite “so near,”
But bid him make a triple coffin of
The very thickest, most expensive oak !

When Sexton Giles had given this good advice
He went into the grave, and helped the Squire

To mount aloft—Who found it difficult
To climb a ladder in a lengthy shroud.
He stumbled oft, but was too dazed to think,
It had gone better if he'd held it up.
But Giles climbed after him, and "bandy George"
Gave him a hand when nearly at the top.
Thus once again Tough breathed the "upper airs,"
And now knew where he was, though very weak.
He saw the well-known tombs in the Churchyard,
And shuffled in his shroud towards the gate,
Meaning to call a fly, and so get home.

"What are you thinking of?" the Sexton roared.
"Have you no senses?—Why, your'e all in white!
"Just step into the vestry—George will run
"And fetch your clothes from home—No—that wont do
"They'd lock him up—they'd take him for a thief."

The night was dark—the flaring lanthorns shed
A ghastly, dancing light upon the group ;
And, worst of all, the shouts of larking boys
Were heard approaching, full of wildest fun.
Old Giles and George each took Tough by an arm,
And hurried to the Church, and dragged him in,
And set him on a chair, whilst Giles exclaimed,
"Thank Heavens, we're in ! For if those rowdy lads
"Had only seen us, we had lost our lives—
"They would have stoned us three for playing ghost !"

The door was barred and locked—the shutters shut.
The Sexton found poor Tough a glass of wine.
His teeth were chattering from nervousness,
Although the cheerless vestry-room was hot,
Compared with the dank hole where he had bee

When he had drunk his wine, and found his wits,
Or some of them, his rescuer began ;
"There's paper, pen, and ink—Just write a line—
"Your valet surely knows your writing well.

“He’ll send a suit of clothes, and a great coat—
“Though, I forgot—Your servant may refuse
“To lend you clothes that you have left to him—
“But yet—we’ll try it—what a jolly lark!
“The Hall is full of those dear relatives—
“As I came by with George, all windows blazed
“With lights, and countless figures came and went—
“They were all quarrelling about your will!”

Old Giles was right—It *was* a jolly lark!
He carefully unbarred the vestry door, and George
Caught up his light, and hobbled to the Hall.
He rang the bell, and gave the letter in.
The valet knew his master’s fist—The ink
Was scarcely dry upon the envelope—
And in a swoon he fell down on the mat.
The page rushed in, half dead with fright, and gasped
To the awe-stricken mourners, “Here’s a go!
“The Sexton’s man is come for Master’s clothes;
“He have come round—And I’m to bring the brougham
And then he whirled aloft the dreadful note,
And danced, and shrieked, with an hysteric yell,
“I cannot, will not go to fetch a ghost!”

Old Giles was not far wrong—It *was* a lark!
The will had been read out at five o’clock.
The worst was known to all—So people thought—
And many pensive folks had driven home—
But even these had got some *souvenir*,
Some thing of *virtu*, or a mourning ring;
Whilst others had gone round and helped themselves.
Here some point-lace, and there enamels, missed
From their accustomed places, showed the greed
That could not wait until the will was proved.
But many still were prowling round the house,
And taking stock of what would come to them.

The Heir-at-Law and Miss Priscilla Tough
Remained of course—For they in that short time

Had "made it up between them," and were then
 Doing a little courting—Happy pair!
 The golden dawn of new-born, blinding love
 Prevented them from seeing what was prigged.
 Perhaps the cooing Doves, as serpents wise,
 Winked at the legatees. For what was filched
 Before the Valuer had done his work
 Would make the probate-duty something less.
 The will directed it should all be paid
 Out of his mighty haul, by the new Squire.

This was the moment that the note came in
 From Squire Tough to order clothes and brougham!

The plunderers put down, as if red hot,
 The things they'd stowed away to carry home,
 And stood transfixed with superstitious awe.
 Priscilla Tough swept fuming to the bell—
 Ordered her carriage to be brought round "*at once*,"
 And bid the coachman lash the horses up,
 For she had "*urgent messages from home*!"

The coachman grinned, but did as he was bid.
 As soon as she got home, she tore upstairs,
 She did not cry—but locked her boudoir door,
 And then and there wrote off this formal note
 To her enamoured swain ;

"Miss Tough presents
 "Her compliments—And *very much* regrets
 "An unforeseen and painful circumstance,
 "*Which she could not control*, must hinder her
 "From carrying out her promise of to-day.
 "I am, sir, as before,

"PRISCILLA TOUGH."

The scene was ludicrous, but terrible
 To see the legatees' appalling woe—
 The Heir-at-Law blasphemed, spun round, shed tears,
 Swore frightful oaths he'd "*take the law*" of Giles,

Saddled his horse himself, and galloped home.

Some fainted—Others raved and gibbered trash.
Nay ! It was horrible to see the look
Of baffled, covetous Sincerity,
Which sat upon each haggard countenance
Of every rich, but greedy relative
Of that resuscitated millionaire ;
But all made off before the Squire came home.

The Vicar only—he had nerves of steel—
Waited until the brougham was brought round.
The coachman trembled so he could not drive ;
The Vicar took the reins and briskly steered,
With clothes and great coat, to the vestry-room,
And helped his friend to dress, and brought him home.

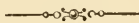
That night—that wondrous night, the Squire sat up
Propped with down pillows in his well-known bed
And sipped his beef-tea—Whilst the Vicar's chair
Was drawn up close to his old College friend.

He knew that he was in for tenfold fees,
And smilingly discussed "the tawny port"
And smartly read out paragraphs to Tough,
Which had appeared in many Newspapers,
About himself, his will, and "*sad demise*"!

But we must end—Suffice to say, that George,
Grave-digging "bandy George," was not forgot ;
Next week he shambled to the Savings Bank,
With a round sum against a "rainy day."

And as for honest Giles—We wont reveal
How much he got—We are no gossips—But
This much will not betray his confidence—
The Squire sent him such a splendid cheque,
That his wife's Sunday silk, the watch, and spoons
Came out at once, and never more were pawned.
And ere he gave up business, which was soon,

He was elected Mayor—The town of Blank,
 When he retired—"for his great services,"
 (He vowed he'd "*do it prime*"—he kept his word)
 Set up his marble bust in the Town Hall!



WAITING.



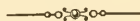
WE wait for light, till darkness comes instead—
 We watch for summer whilst it passes by—
 The things we fancied would prove golden joys,
 But half-enjoyed, like withered roses lie!

We watch and wait!—It is our cruel lot—
 And when things long-expected come at last,
 We know them not—They come in strange disguise,
 Or else the time of longing long is past!

The things that soonest dazzle soonest fade.
 We are like children chasing butterflies,
 Which, when they're caught, their glittering wings are
 crushed;

Their beauty with their flashing freedom dies!

Vanity of vanities!—All things are vain,
 Except in HIM who to the spirit gave
 Its being, hopes, desires, ambitious thoughts,
 Wide, vast, exhaustless as the hungry grave!



THE PERFECT DAY.



FIROAMED through the far-off meadows
 Soon after the midnight hour;
 Weird darkness sat on her ebon throne
 In the pride of her witchlike power.

The stars shone bright in the dew-drops
And the river running by ;
The night-wind whispered amongst the reeds,
And the ripples made reply.

With its silent slumbering myriads
The City oblivious lay,
And drank, in a draught of Lethé cool,
Strength for the coming day !

Those were moments of solemn stillness,
And darkness that might be felt—
As the woodbine's smell and the glowworm's spark
Seemed in glory and fragrance blent !

Nothing portended the dawning,
Save a feeble streak of grey
In the far-off East—and the sleepless chimes,
As the moments slipped away.

But anon, through the wavering darkness,
Stole the faint glimmering light
Of the lamp of love, by the couch of pain,
Watching the weary night !

Then darkness changed into gloaming,
And the grey streak brighter grew—
A cock crew here, and a cock crew there—
And the weary stars withdrew.

From the hearths of a hundred homesteads
Ascended the curling smoke ;
The heart of the City throbbed loud again,
And the children of toil awoke.

I saw men " walking abroad as trees "
Or the shadows of a dream,
As the milkmaid tripped to her labours,
And the ploughman yoked his team.

For a short time longer the darkness

Wrestled against the light,

And then the misty battalions all

Spread wing, and took to flight !

The portals of light flew open,

And the Heralds of the Sun,

In their gorgeous robes of crimson state,

Spoke another day begun.

In the thin, clear air of morning,

Baptized in rosy light

As a newborn babe, the world shone out

Purged from all stain of night !

At last, from his Orient palace

In the caverns of the deep,

Nature's High-Priest the Sun came forth,

Like a giant refreshed with sleep.

Ineffable floods of glory

He poured over city and wood ;

Each hamlet and cot, each bush and brake,

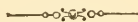
In radiance transfigured stood !

Ten thousand flowery censers

He touched with his flaming ray,

And a cloud of incense and melody

Greeted the perfect day !



THE RUPERT CORRESPONDENCE.

A LETTER FROM PAPA ABROAD, TO HIS LITTLE ONES'
MASTIFF AT HOME.



H Rupert, * Rupert ! gentlest of the brave,

My darling children's dog—strong, tawny hound,

What would I give to see thy wistful face

Thy form so full of kindliness and strength !

* Rupert is a cross between the old English mastiff and the bloodhound. The author's children bought him with their pocket-money when he was six weeks old.

—There play my Violet, and Stella too,
And pretty Frank ; I see them in a dream—
I see their gambols, listen to their shouts ;
I hear thy deep-toned bark as they run on
So nimble-footed daring thee to catch!—

I am alone ! My Stella's welcome tap
At "daddy's study-door" I think I hear ;
I see her creeping in, to leap upon
My joyful knees, whilst with a sounding kiss,
She says, "Oh dear Papa, I love you so!"
I make no answer, but I hug her close ;
And then, with pettish coaxing, she explains,
"Oh silly Dad ! You do not understand,
"I don't want kisses—I would like some sweets!"
She strokes my whiskers with her baby hand
And says, "You dear old Tom-cat !—Daddy do
"Just come along with me—you know, Dad, where ;
"The side-board cupboard in the dining-room!"—
I take her hand and we together go—
Rupert jumps up—he hears the jingling keys !
He leaves off basking on the warm hearthrug,
And follows us, for he, sagacious dog,
Well understands the music of the keys,
And knows there is a bit of cake for him,
Where his young mistress seeks her sugar plums.

The dream is past !—I now am quite alone—
Oh Rupert, Rupert ! my sweet children's dog,
Could'st thou but thrust thy brave, black, honest snout
Into my hand, or standing on hind legs,
Put on my shoulders both thy kindly paws,
And brush away the tears of lonesomeness
That will run down, in spite of self-control
Down my bereaved cheeks—I'd shout and sing !
But, bless thee, Rupert ! thou art safe at home
Whilst wintry seas divide me from my pets,
But they are safe with Him who ne'er forgets !

RUPERT'S NEW-YEAR'S LETTER TO HIS MASTER IN
AMSTERDAM.

Most Honoured Sir! Big Rupert greets thee well!
He wags his tail at very thought of thee;
No! not "Most Honoured Sir"—Beloved Friend,
I cannot use a stiff formality
Tow'rds one I've learned to love, but not to fear;
Fear has its torment, but Big Rupert loves
With his large, blund'ring heart, both thee and thine.
He'd send his "duty," but he thinks that "love,"
True love, quite fresh from home, will better please,
E'en though it comes from Rupert; for he played
With Violet, and Frank, and Stella too,
Up to the moment he dictated this!
Dogs cannot write, and so the gentle hand
Of my beloved Mistress, thy dear wife,
Took down all that I meant—She read my eyes;
The little ones looked on, and where she failed
To guess my thoughts, the children well supplied
All that was lacking, for we are such friends!
I love each child and each of them loves me.
We have no secrets—Perfect openness
And trustful love pervade our intercourse.
And now, Good Sir—No, no! Beloved Friend,
Let me inform thee that my doggish heart
Was like to break, to see thy wife and bairns,
With Uncle Charlie and his little ones,
And kind Aunt Amy, sitting at thy board
On Christmas day—I saw no chair * for thee!—
I watched, I did not stare—My black eyebrows
O'erhang, and so prevent my seeming rude—
I watched, Oh, yes! I watched each face so dear
To thee, my absent Friend—In every eye
I saw a tear, when Stella drank thy health.
Oh what "a love" thy youngest darling is!

* Rupert used often to sit at table, on a chair, the tallest of the party, and always behaved with the strictest propriety.

I could not drink thy health—Dogs drink no wine.
I feared I'd howl, so I sneaked off downstairs,
And had a quiet cry in the back-yard.
Hoping to see thee soon, Dear Friend, *Adieu* !
Rupert to guard thy home his best will do !

New-Year's-tide, 1877.

THE STORM CHILD.

STAR of beauty ! Queen of mirth—
You can be no child of earth !
Half your parentage, I ween,
Is derived from lightning's sheen !

When the dreadful storm-bolts flash,
When the billows boom and crash,
When the oaks uprooted lie,
Frolic glitters in your eye !

PLOUGHING AND SOWING.

THE wind is merciless—Each drop of rain
Scalds like the tear of disappointed spite ;
The dragged ploughman plashes painfully
Through ruts and pools, and wishes for the night !

His dripping smock clings tight ; his slouchèd hat
Pours icy streamlets down his shuddering back ;
His tired team plods wearily along,
Leaving fresh quagmires in the furrow's track !

How the gale whistles through the leafless copse !
How the rank nettles shiver in the blast !
How the frail rushes bow their slender forms !
How the dark river hurtles roaring past !

Destroying Winter ! one might well believe
 The ruin wrought by thee were death indeed,
 Did not the ploughman plough the clods in hope,
 Did not in hope the farmer sow his seed !



CATHARINE SPENCE.

A TRUE TALE OF THE ISLE OF DOGS, LONDON, IN THE
 YEAR OF GRACE 1869.*



RAY you, kind folks, have you ever heard
 Of Cubitt Town, Isle of Dogs ?
 It's the grisly Cholera's London home,
 Amidst typhus, famine, and fogs !

Fair lovers of change and excitement lay
 That sensational novel down !
 Let us go together, and visit in thought
 Saxon's Alley in Cubitt Town.

Up the dismal staircase in No. 1.
 We must mount to the "third floor back,"
 And the scene I'll show you has this good point,
 It is terribly true—Alack !

Nay, search not your purse for its smallest coin—
 It's no case for alms or bread.
 You needn't to knock at the door, for see—
 The occupants are stone-dead !

In a corner, on rags, lies a skeleton form
 With its glazed eyes staring wide—
 It is Catharine Spence, aged thirty-four,
 With a new-born babe at her side !

* See the daily papers of the period.

Hard by the sheetless corpse, on a box,
Is a tract "*On the Goodness of God!*"
And a lump of salt which the famished wretch
In the throes of starvation gnawed!

Ask you perchance whether Catharine Spence
Was a trull or a faithless wife?
Had she no husband to work, or beg,
Or steal to preserve her life?

She had a husband—two years and more
He had had no work. They say
The "Guardians" had *offered* the starveling work—
Stone-breaking at eightpence a day!

Spirit and strength and energy gone,
Spence prepared "to die in peace";
He went raving mad on the second day*
After death gave his wife release!

At the "Coroner's Quest" on Catharine Spence
A juror "felt bound to object"
To the proper verdict of "*Starved to Death*,"
As "it might on the district reflect!"

"What use are the dead?" asked this parish sage,
"An egg-box is all they're worth—
"Or else without any coffin I'd put
"Dead paupers into the earth!"†

So now, gentle Ladies, you've been with me
To Cubitt Town, Isle of Dogs—
Can you wonder that paupers will sometimes die
In that home of typhus and fogs?

* This fact was proved.

† The above words, exactly as they were reported in the newspapers, were not contradicted.

THE STOLEN BRIDE.



MY Darling's name was painted on the clouds—
 It flashed with setting suns across the sea—
 It dawned at daybreak with the lusty morn—
 It rustled through the cornfields' waving gold.
 The dancing brooklets told it to the woods—
 Winds whispered it abroad—The fragrant spires
 Of summer flow'rets chimed it with their bells.
 It flashed upon the insects' meteor wings—
 The purple heath-clad moors grew bright with it.
 The moss-bound, dripping runnels lisped it forth,
 'Twas buzzed abroad by nectar-loving bees,
 It glittered on the frost-decked jewelled sprays—
 'Twas writ in moonlight on the virgin snows—
 The wintry storms declaimed it to the rocks.
 Midway to heaven, his "parable" of song
 The lark "took up," and bid the angels note
 The peerless beauty of my promised bride.
 All earth, all sky, all air, all sea at once
 Seemed drunk with one delicious draught of love!

Death, envious churl, that always seeks to cast
 His blighting shadow over loveliest things—
 Death passed that way, and saw my guileless love!
 Slowly he flitted by with gaunt Despair,
 His twin-born sister—And they gave a shriek
 Of fiendish joy that made all nature dumb!
 They spread their wings across the frightened sun,
 And in the darkness stole my bride away—
 And now for me, Sun, Moon, and Stars again,
 And e'en Hope's radiant self, must shine in vain!

THE MILLINER.

SWEET May is over! Flora lays aside
Her soberer hues, for her most gorgeous dress.
Voluptuous June is in its radiant pride,
And all is perfume, smiles, and loveliness.

The homelier tints of Spring forsake the skies,
Their simpler garb the woods and fields forget ;
Robuster beauties and more flaunting dyes
They now display, than white or violet.

The subtle fragrance of the lilac flows
No more abroad upon the breath of morn ;
The lime-tree's luscious bloom, the queenly rose,
Supplant the fainter odours of the thorn.

If modish Nature dons her brave array,
To dance, while Fashion pipes a frolic tune,
Who chides dear woman, if she owns the sway
Of bright-winged Pleasure in delicious June ?

Fie on the sour, unkempt philosophy
That makes on woman churlish, senseless war !
If Eden drooped without her, earth would be
A loveless waste condemned to bloom no more.

Ten thousand nameless sweets and things of joy
She culls for man, or leads him where they grow ;
Yet, stay, sweet nymphs, nor think without alloy
Contentment waits on rich attire and show !

See yon pale creature on her couch of pain,
Whence comes that languor wan—that hopeless gaze
Of blighted girlhood ? She was justly vain
Of her young beauty once, in happier days !

But now she lies in ecstasy of grief
 That she must die. Her life's fast ebbing tides
 Run daily weaker, as the sea with brief
 Impulse flows back until it quite subsides !

She was a milliner of peerless skill,
 A matchless judge of colour, taste, and dress,
 And in her dreams, poor soul, she ponders still
 Fresh miracles of stylish loveliness !

In London's cruel world of din and smoke,
 Night after night, for three long seasons, she
 In stifling work-rooms toiled, till daylight broke,
 A very slave to Fashion's tyranny.


Poor drooping girl ! She made heroic stand,
 Till, 'gainst disease still battling manfully,
 Consumption took her by her wasted hand,
 And led her to her garret-home to die !

Voluptuous June is at its radiant height—
 Fête, park, and garden claim their flaunting crowd.
 Alack to think that, in the angels' sight,
 Those fripperies may cost a woman's shroud !



THE TAILORESS TO DARKNESS.



 AGE, dumb Physician, DARKNESS goes his
 rounds,
 And pours his balsams into wounds that
 throbbed,

But, at his healing touch, forget to smart !
 SLEEP, gentle NURSING SISTER, watches by
 The quiet bed where anguish groans no more !—
 Oh, DARKNESS ! Glad relief from garish day,
 When the spent soul would sob itself to sleep
 Weary of life, and craving for repose ;
 Determined, unsubdued, too proud to flinch,

But not ashamed to shed refreshing tears
Which fall unnoticed in night's kindly gloom,
Unmocked by curs whose pillow is unblest
By prayer or tear—who, always overgorged,
Yes, surfeited with every toothsome thing,
Delight to snarl like STAMBOUL's mangy whelps,
Who own no friendships, but delight to pick
Their filthy livelihood as scavengers!—
Oh, DARKNESS, DARKNESS! Though in my poor room
The candle is put out, to save it for
The sadder glimmer of another night,
When I again must strain my fretted nerves,
Although the rats are playing on the stairs—
The squalid stairs up to my attic home—
I hail thy gloom, which brings my eyes relief!—
Oh, DARKNESS! let me whisper one fond word—
Why should I whisper? I am not afraid
To speak to DARKNESS. He's long been to me
The trusted friend whose kindly skill can shut
The windows of the heart against despair!
I love thee, DARKNESS! Take me to thine arms!
My soul is surfeited with blinding day—
My soul is sore athirst, and pants for rest—
It pines for dimness, where Earth's weary ones
Can flit unnoticed, in their poor attire,
To the vague realms of silent EMPTINESS
Made for the stars, my grieving self, and thee!



BUILDING SEPULCHRES.

GRATEFULLY DEDICATED TO THE MEDICAL PROFESSION.



AND so poor Pill is gone! A useful man,

“Both poor and rich will miss him very much!”

Thus drawled Lord Squeezum, Chairman of the
Board;

A very rich and mighty nobleman—
Poor “Johnny Pill,” the man of whom he spoke
As just deceased, was Surgeon to the Board.
They gave him scanty wages for much work ;
His practice—it was ill-paid and far spread.
A wealthy Doctor in the neighbouring town
Physicked the richer folks for guinea fees—
Pill was called in in times of urgency,
When Peony* was absent or unwell.
By dint of industry and weary tramps,
The small practitioner contrived to live.
On one occasion, he had saved the life
Of his proud Lordship when already blue,
Choked by a piece of meat at dinner-time ;
For Squeezum ate too freely and too fast.
His lordship owned he’d had a “narrow squeak,”
And said, he’d “think of” Pill, but that was all—
“Thinking of” men does very little good !
Ten days before Pill died, the Vicar called
Upon Lord Squeezum with a serious face.
He came “in confidence” to wait upon
His Lordship, so he said, about poor Pill.
Pill’s mother was bedridden and half blind ;
His crippled sister kept a boarding-school,
Or tried to keep what didn’t keep herself.
He sent them money, all that he could spare,
But was security as well, for rent—
Three-quarters then were owing—Pill had tried
To get his bills in, but the times were bad—
He could not get a shilling at the pinch.
He’d be sold up, but worse, his mother too.
The parson then produced a list of names
On which his own was written for two pounds.
You’ll guess the rest. Lord S. refused to give,
Cursed kindly Pill for a Quixotic fool,
And showed the Vicar roughly to the door.
It was no use to ask the richer swells ;

* The name of the fashionable Doctor.

“ If Squeezum wouldn’t give, the case was bad.”
Pill was sold up ! The neighbours all cried shame ;
They had subscribed their pence, their poor half-crowns,
Which, simple souls, they hoped would touch the lord !
These all had gone into the landlord’s fob,
Who gladly took their money “ on account.”
And yet the cripple and the mother blind
Of Pill, their friend at birth, in life, in death,
Were in the workhouse, through the shabbiness
Of a vain Peer, who counted Pill forsooth
“ As not a gentleman,” because he worked for bread !
The folks grew angry—Squeezum had been hissed.
But when they heard that Pill was really dead—
Dead of a broken heart, their wrath blazed out !
They broke his windows, and they lamed his mare.
Such was the crisis on that Friday morn,
When the Board met, and Squeezum took the chair.
He felt some awkwardness, and so did all ;
For several letters were before the Board
From candidates who sought the vacancy—
The subject must come on, and so my Lord
Essayed at once to launch it pleasantly.
“ And so poor Pill is gone ! ” Squeezum began.
“ A very useful man ; both poor and rich
“ Will miss him very much—although I feel
“ Some blame, yes, serious blame is due,
“ Upon the score of his extravagance ;
“ Why was he surety for his sister’s debts ?
“ The Countess Squeezum (dowager, I mean)
“ Has her allowance—Not one farthing more
“ Beyond her settlement need she expect !
“ To pay such debts as Pill’s the other day
“ Would have been wrong—a gross absurdity—
“ I told the Vicar so—I say so still—
“ He saved my life ; but then he took the fee
“ Which Peony was most entitled to.
“ Well, well, he was a decent kind of man,
“ A horse for work amongst the common sort.

“ So, now he's dead, I think we might erect
“ Some small memorial to his memory,
“ A public fountain in the market-place,
“ With troughs for cattle to be watered at.
“ 'Twill please the townsfolk, who're a carping lot.
“ We could not put a tablet in the church ;
“ For persons in Pill's station 'twouldn't do—
“ The workhouse chapel is the place for that.
“ So, gentlemen, a fountain I suggest,
“ And here's ten guineas towards the pious work—
“ A dead man's wants are easily supplied,
“ And what he gets, is given once for all ! ”
My Lord sat down, and anxiously looked round ;
He saw long faces, but got no response.
Ill-mannered members whispered and looked glum ;
Some tittered, others coughed and blew their nose ;
One man indeed, less timid than the rest,
Ventured to name the dead man's relatives,
On which the Peer grew quite himself again,
Glared fiercely round, a bully every inch,
And bid the Clerk at once begin to read
The minutes passed at the foregoing Board.
So, after all, Pill got no “ monument,”
Though Squeezum “ lay in state ” at his demise,
And wreaths of *immortelles* bedecked his tomb !
The business over, each man went his way,
To think no more of Pill, but ruminate
Upon their bargains, crops of hay, or bets ;
Or else to marvel at the justice quaint
That gives most power to hard, unfeeling men !
The week ran out. The Vicar printed bills,
And sent them far and wide, to say that he
Would preach next Sunday morning on the death.
The Sunday came, the Parish Church was crammed—
The Chapel doors were closed upon that day ;
And Minister and flock repaired to Church,
In honour to the “ Memory of the just.”
Rich folks were there who came in carriages

To Morning Service, and came always late.
Poor folks were there in garments patched and darned ;
The idiot boy was there, in whose dark soul
Pill's patient care had kindled gleams of light,
To know, alas, his desolation now !—
Suffice to say the pulpit stairs were throng'd.
It was a plain discourse—a homely one—
And yet its simple fervour made it great.
The Vicar was deep-read, of learned lore,
His words well chosen, with a poet's fire ;
But yet he felt, when speaking in God's name,
The best discourse was that best understood.
He that would teach, must know his theme himself,
And feel it too ; and this makes eloquence !
The Vicar had a theme, and prefaced it
With taking words of sweet solemnity ;
And then he spoke of Pill's unwearied toils ;
Amongst the needy how he went about,
And healed the poor, so Good-Physician-like,
And, as his Master, scarce had time to eat.
How, when the small-pox raged, he risked his life
In every lane, and slum, and poisoned den
Where famine reigned, and children cursed and fought
With their gaunt parents for a mouldy crust !—
The preacher didn't tell how Peony,
Though not afraid, yet durs'n't do the same—
The *upper ten* declared they'd turn him off
If he should venture to bring home to them
Risk of infection—Yet sly Death secured
Some few of these, and struck them down like sheep,
For Pill to tend them in their closing hours ;
When shunned by all except expectant heirs,
Who were in duty bound to “ watch the case ”—
Death and the doctors, legatees, and worms,
Cannot afford to think of squeamishness—
But to complete our tale. The Vicar spoke,
In guarded words, about Pill's relatives
Now in the workhouse, from no fault of theirs ;

And then he spoke about the POOR MAN'S FRIEND,
Who yet shall come to judge both small and great ;
Who, whilst on earth, Himself was needy too ;
To whom poor women of their substance gave,
And ministered in love to His few wants.
"Talk not of Charity in such a case !"
The Vicar cried, with burning eloquence.
"I ask for reparation for a crime,
"Not for atonement—that you cannot make !
"The noblest friend both rich and poor e'er had
"All round the country, now lies in his grave,
"From cowardice, or avarice, or both,
"Displayed by those who owe their lives to him !
"If Christ should come," the preacher quaintly said,
"If Christ should visit now the country-side,
"And find Pill's house deserted, closed, to let—
"How would He travel on from house to house,
"Seeking His friend, who laboured for the poor !
"And when He heard that he was dead and gone,
"As he shed tears for Lazarus, He'd weep ;
"And then He'd shake the dust from off His feet,
"And get Him back from this ungrateful world
"To bid impatient Justice still delay,
"And whisper Mercy yet to plead a while,
"Until a mock Christianity be ripe
"For the dread 'wine-press of the wrath of God.'
"When that cutaneous thing called 'charity'
"Shall be peeled off from an apostate Church
"By the fierce heat of the Refiner's fire !
"But this, my friends, the Son of Man would do,
"Before He turned His back upon the world—
"He'd go to that gaunt house with whited walls,
"Where weeps a crippled girl beside the wreck
"Of her who once was beautiful and rich,
"But now a pauper on a pallet bed,
"And tell her how her valiant son was safe !
"He'd tell her how He had 'a remnant left,'
"Whose hearts He'd touched to sympathise with her,

"And bring her forth from those blank workhouse walls!
 "You are the men—Here present in this Church!
 "You are the people who shall do this work!
 "The Son of Man is here—here in this fane!
 "Go forth with Him, and take His poor ones home!
 "And when He calls, from the four winds of heaven,
 "His chosen servants, you will hear His voice.
 "He'll say to *you*, 'Well done! 'twas done for Me!
 "'Come and receive the guerdon of your love,
 "'Enter the gates through which the merciful
 "'Pass in to share the joy of Me, their Lord!'"

* * * * *

We needn't say the Vicar's words went home.
 All hearts were stirred—So large a sum was raised,
 That Pill's bereaved ones never wanted more.
 The Vicar, in the chancel, placed a slab
 At his own cost, and thus the legend ran:
 "*John Pill, a Copy of the Poor Man's Friend!*"

MORAL.

The conscious meanness, that compounds its guilt
 By building florid sepulchres for men
 Whom it has starved, or slowly done to death—
 This sort of meanness is a sovereign salve
 To some folk's conscience: It casts dust, they think,
 Into the Devil's eyes, and dupes the world
 To count them types of open-handedness!
 The "giddy world" is quite too shrewd for that,
 And Satan knows his own, and won't forego
 His lawful title for ten-guinea doles!
 It is the acme of hypocrisy
 To slay a man—and then lament his fate,
 And honour him with splendid obsequies,
 As for Don Carlos gloomy Philip did.
 What is the use of glowing epitaphs?
 The living dog would much prefer, I trow,
 To get his bone in season, than be praised

As a "dead lion" when he is no more!
 There are degrees and shades of shabbiness.
 The mask of Charity sits most awry
 Upon a Scrooge, and can't disguise his face.
 At morning sow betimes thy precious seed;
 Thy hand withhold not at the fall of night;
 Friend of the needy—in thy time of need,
 Thou shalt reap joy, as thou hast sown the light!



VOICES OF THE BYGONE.



DREAMY voice sighs round me, full of pathos,
 As from a harp entranced—a voice of weeping,
 Like Summer rains, or like the West Wind's
 cadence

That lulls the dead, but cannot wake their sleeping!

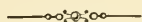
What is the voice? Why does it throb and vibrate,
 Yet cannot rouse me from Grief's torpid slumbers?
 I hear!—I hear it! and my heart-strings tremble,
 But cannot answer to its baffling numbers!

What is the voice? It is the BYGONE speaking
 Of joys long drowned in SORROW'S tideless ocean!
 The Autumn leaves, though sear, perforce must quiver,
 If but the South Wind blow, with sad emotion!

What is the gift ungrasped that shows us places
 We never thought of in our wakeful being?
 Years after visited, they're quite familiar;
 We know them well—They're scarcely worth the seeing!

And so it is the spirit has weird glimpses
 Of pleasures dead, not unremembered wholly;
 They come as strangers, yet with homely features;
 But, what they've been to us dawns on us slowly!

It is as though our soul could make excursions,
And in the hours of sleep its flight had taken
Upon adventure's quest, betimes returning
Unnoticed to our bed before we waken !



THE RISING STORM.



THE tempest is rising, and mischief's afoot,
The sob of the whirlwind is heard in the
trees ;

The leaves are all quivering—the ominous roll
Of thunders approaching is borne on the breeze !

The clouds are collecting—th' horizon is draped
With terrible banners of orange and black ;
Anon the forked lightnings leap forth from the gloom,
Like scouts going first to illumine the track !

Soon, soon shall the storm in its greatness rush forth,
And smite down and rend in resistless career,
With a tumult of triumph appalling and loud,
Till its fury is spent and the battle-field clear !

Then again shall the sun in his radiance shine out,
And the jubilant sky wear its gala attire ;
For the pestilent vapours are all swept away
By the tempest's strong blast, as by besom of fire !

With a plashing of drops and the singing of birds,
All nature, refreshed, shall exult in the calm ;
The brooklet shall sparkle, and dance with delight,
And the linden-blooms shed forth their exquisite balm !

BULLYING.
—♦—

THE thrilling joy of making men feel small,
 And gloating o'er their downcast, humbled looks
 To browbeat, and insult the helpless weak,
 Such is the pastime and delight of those
 Small "Jacks in Office," who themselves get snubbed,
 And "sat upon" by those of higher rank !
 When "Jack" is more outrageous than his wont,
 And swears at those who cannot knock him down,
 Be sure the knave has been most soundly "wiggled,"
 Or else his "better-half" has tweaked his nose !
 You get insulted—But, console yourself !
 This extra swagger, extra insolence
 Denotes the smarting of the moral birch ;
 To "take it out" of you, soothes half the pain ;
 And like the bullet which garroters chew
 When being scourged, you are his *anodyne* !
 You do not like it ?—Let this comfort you,
 The bully has beforehand got his due !

—♦—
EX UNO DISCE OMNES.
—♦—

PITIFUL Patty pitied a kitten
 Lying all bleeding out in the snow.
 Poor, pretty kitten by a dog bitten !
 Cruel the dog to worry her so !

Pitiful Patty picked up the kitten—
 But, to the kitten's eternal disgrace,
 The graceless kitten, pitied and bitten,
 Ended by scratching kind Patty's face !

THE EMIGRANT AND THE SUN.

THE Emigrant, in far-off lands
Where singing birds are all unknown,
Where skylark's note is never heard,
And the wild rose has never blown,
Can in the sunshine find delight—
It shone at home but yesternight !

At morn, when o'er the silent plain,
When o'er the sea it seeks to rise,
He greets the Sun come back again
From shining where his village lies.
It's warmed, it's beautified and cheered
The homestead to his heart endeared !

Could the Sun speak, he'd bid it tell
The latest tidings of each friend ;
And when it takes its night's farewell,
Kind greetings to his home he'd send.
But yet contented he must be
To think, 'twill soon his dear ones see !

THE VILLAGE SMITHY.

CLINKING hammer of the village forge !
O curling, ruddy smoke from smithy's fire !
O ruby sparks that from the anvil fly !
Clink, curl, and flash for aye, and never tire !

How oft !—How oft I've stood a little lad,
And watched the sparks, and marked the rising smoke,
At that same smithy, where the self-same smith
Is forging horse-shoes with the self-same stroke.

O sights and sounds of childhood's tranquil joys,
 Ye cast a bridge across life's troublous stream :
 Listening and watching, now I live again
 My happy boyhood, once a golden dream !


The smithy stands unchanged—The smith works on
 A little greyer, but in strength as young
 As years ago. . But me he knows no more,
 Aged prematurely, and with heart unstrung !

Oh, honest Master Smith, reach forth thy hand—
 Thy grimy hand, and welcome back to home
 A world-sick wanderer, once thy "little friend,"
 But now come back worn-down, no more to roam !



MEMORY'S DREAMS.



H, sing again that ancient measure
 Which oft, in simple childhood's hour
 Caused my young heart to bound with pleasure,
 Thou voice of soul-entrancing power !

Tell me once more that dear old story
 At which I've often wept before,
 Bid scenes anew to rise before me,
 Which I had thought to see no more !

How long the gaze of memory lingers
 Amidst the scenes of past delight,
 Until oblivion's shadowy fingers
 Blot half their beauties from the sight !

For years to bygone pleasures clinging
 Hope looks for joy's returning beam ;
 Till time at last no comfort bringing,
 She tries to think it all a dream !

Is not the heart long, long forsaken
 Like exiled minstrel's favourite lute ?
 The stranger tries in vain to waken
 Its chords so melancholy mute !

But if the minstrel unexpected,
 When years have fled, returns again,
 And on his harp, so long neglected,
 Plays o'er some sweet familiar strain ;


The grief-worn soul shakes off its slumbers,
 Starts up to life and joy anew ;
 And, drinking in those magic numbers,
 Finds all its dreams of bliss were true !

Yes ! life has hours of joy ecstatic,
 Moments unmarred by care or smart,
 Though, like the comet-stars erratic,
 They may be far and few apart !

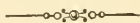
Oh, yes ! the pilgrim lone and weary,
 The selfish world's unwelcomed guest
 Finds too, although his lot be dreary,
 Seasons of comfort and of rest.

Then sing again that well-known measure,
 Thou voice of soul-entrancing power—
 Bring back the scenes of youthful pleasure,
 The painted joys of childhood's hour !

KINDNESS.


AY not, kindly deeds are useless,
 Deeds of love all cast away—
 Now is the time of shadows,
 Soon will come the perfect day !

Countless wayfarers that wander
 In the golden summer hours,
 Never mark the glad lark's warbling,
 Take no notice of the flowers !
 Life's a life of strife and bustle,
 Carking care, engrossing fight ;
 Golden gardens, cornfield's rustle
 Bring to few their pure delight.
 But amidst the din and tumult,
 Far above the common herd,
 Hearts there are that throb and tremble
 At a kindly look or word !
 Music always rises upwards
 Towards the seraphs' flaming choirs—
 Deeds of love burn on for ever,
 Quenchless as the planets' fires !
 Faint not, generous hearts and kindly—
 You will find your sure reward—
 Happy they who know to wake in
 Downcast hearts a hopeful chord !



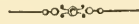
LOVE'S GARLANDS.




 LOVE'S garlands cannot altogether die,
 But, like the precious relics of the rose,
 Time may the posy's string untie,
 The scattered petals sweetness still disclose !
 Their ashes cannot altogether fade !
 Fondly enshrined in Memory's crystal vase,
 A charm and pensive beauty still pervade
 The withered leaves, to Love's regretful gaze.
 Endearment's tender halo lingers long
 O'er faded loveliness, and holds it fast
 In Dreamland freshness, crowned with flowers and song,
 Years after song is hushed, and flowers o'erpast.

And so, bereaved and solitary souls
Live in the bygone, unconvinced that fate
Has slain their joys, and the chill River rolls
Betwixt their present and their former state !

But when Hope's last, reluctant, fading spark
Flickers aloft with strong convulsive glare,
Then Death himself steps in so kindly dark,
And wafts love's martyrs heavenward through the air !



DESPAIR.



HOPE is a Seraph with a burning torch
Which he has kindled at the fires that glow
Upon the altar of Almighty Love !

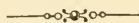
His heavenly mission is to comfort men,
And teach them bravely to encounter ills,
And wait for better times, until new light
Shines down consolingly upon their path.

'Tis thus the clear, courageous, queenly moon,
Crowned by the hand of God "to rule the night"—
'Tis thus the moon, in winter's gales bursts through
The clouds, and shines upon the waterfloods—
The raving, rabid, foaming waterfloods,
And shows the labouring skipper where he is,
And bids him mark undauntedly the force,
The stature of the waves that mountains high
Rush to and fro, and threaten to engulf
His ship, his all, with wat'ry overthrow !—
So he takes heart and tighter grasps the helm,
And in the teeth of blustering shipwreck, steers
Right through the seas that part on either side,
And brings his vessel safely into port.

Woe to the wretch condemned to grope his way
Through the dark labyrinths and corridors,

The spectre-haunted halls, and dreadful caves
 Of the grim prison-keep of stark Despair—
 The wan daylight that flickers through its bars,
 The voice of children playing far away,
 The piteous buzz of the imprisoned bee,
 Which cruel Fancy makes him think he hears,
 All these—Yes, every thought and sound assume
 Quaint forms of anguish draped in horrid shrouds,
 And stalk relentlessly through his poor brain,
 Gaunt, hideous skeletons of former joys!

Angels of Hope! oh, come from Heaven and bring
 The balm of Promise back to that poor soul—
 The balm of promised Mercy to the lost!
 The gladdest envoys from your Golden Gate
 Are those who fly to cheer the desolate!

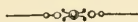


HOPE.



WHEN the broad sea is salt no more,
 And planets fade from darkened sky,
 Should chaos fill the spheres with wreck,
 And every thing of lustre die;
 Should Nature fling aside her crown,
 And primal silence hush the glade,
 Should sun and stars withdraw their light,
 To set in cold funereal shade;
 Should desolation reign supreme,
 And every golden scene of earth
 Be blurred, or wholly blotted out,
 With each dejected thing of mirth;
 Should Music's witching tongue forget
 Its magic charm, its healing power;
 And every bird of song grow dumb,
 Dismayed at skies that always lower;

Hope would at least remain with men,
And cast her wistful eyes abroad,
Until she found the light again,
In the sure Promise of her God!

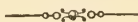


THE RESIDUE.



CHANGE of grief which simulates repose,
The residue of pain is Happiness
To countless thousands, slowly-martyred souls,
Or else the salvage of a wave-tossed life,
The wreckage of the goodly bark on which
The soul set forth upon the sparkling sea
That glittered so in boyhood's early dawn!
Content and gratitude are oft mistook
For full-blown Happiness, by lookers-on—
The placid lull that ends a day of storm,
The afterglow that, by comparison,
Seems perfect peace to life's lorn wayfarers,
The consciousness that, for a night at least,
The strife is over, and the battle fought,
E'en though chagrin and disappointment's hosts
Have but drawn off to furbish up their darts
For a worse conflict, at the coming dawn,
These make true bliss to many a hope-sick soul—
Talk not of joy to downcast hearts like these!
The broken viol shall discourse no more
In leaping harmonies, or wake to dance—
'Tis calm delight to nurse the glimmering spark
That now remains of once consuming fires—
Absence of hope, absence of fluttering dreams,
A drowsy sense of brief immunity
From curst ambitions, every pondered scheme,
Which all lie sleeping in their several tombs,
This makes the sum of millions' Blessedness!

Man's prayed-for Eden proves itself to most
 A *hortus siccus* * of once brilliant hopes,
 A well-trimmed garden of loves dead and gone.
 The outspread world which once we coveted,
 Which was too small for our imperial sway,
 Unwished for lies wrapped up in sombre mists ;
 A scant horizon bounds our view at last ;
 And he's most blest who watches most resigned
 Beside the stone that marks the resting place
 Of cherished projects vanished into space !




WHAT THE NIGHTINGALE SAID.



THE day was over, and the rayless sun
 Glared through the darkling trees like fiery eye
 Of some tall Cyclops who would catch a glimpse
 Of the fair Naiads in the rippling stream !
 The shapely flags stood silent and erect,
 A bank of golden clouds reflected shone
 In the broad Rhine ; and on the mountain tops,
 Where yet the eagles soared above their nests,
 A dazzling veil of rosy light had fall'n :
 The honey-bees hummed in the meads no more ;
 The crickets chirped ; and gaudy dragon-flies
 With folded wings, swayed on the bending reeds.
 The water-lilies closed their glistening cups,
 Lest the night-dews should dim the gold within.
 Belated swifts, to catch the dancing gnats,
 Like elfin arrows flashed o'er flood and field ;
 Lights, here and there, showed in the village panes,
 Whilst in the orchard, hid by apple blooms,
 The nightingale declaimed her tale of woe
 So full of vivid grief—and thus she sang :

* A collection of dried flowers.

THE SONG.

LEEP sorrowing men ! ye can forget your grief
When sultry daytime and the sun are gone !
I know no respite ; night brings no relief ;
In dreaming moments, I must yet sing on !

Poor lonesome, russet bird ! My life is grey—
Grief my song's burden—mourning its refrain ;
If trouble for a moment goes its way,
It soon returns, and I must sing again !

I have a sorrow fathomless and deep ;
Men love my song ; my tale they've never heard.
Oh, woe is me !—I sing, but cannot weep—
For such distress I am a little bird !

Music consoles my overburdened heart ;
All night I sing till other birds awake—
To tell my pain assuages half its smart,
I must keep singing, or my heart would break !

In hopeful Springtide, when all Nature's glad,
When daylight lengthens and the buds appear,
The evening star itself looks calmly sad,
And every glist'ring dew drop seems a tear !

E'en May and June bring no delights to me ;
When hawthorn blows, and carmine roses blush,
I still wail on, or listen wonderingly
To the gay ditties of the jocund thrush !

When apple-blooms are pink, and pear trees white,
Twilight's my sunshine, gloaming is my day :
For ever doomed to be the Bird of Night,
My life's long hours in shadow pass away !

And so, till death's release, I must repeat
My strain of anguish, weird and passionate !
Ah, mocking world ! thou call'st me warbler sweet—
But dost not care how lone—how desolate !

TOLERATION.

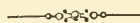


HISTORIANS tell, in mediæval times
 There ruled a custom full of quaint conceit ;
 Blasphemers were to Satan given o'er*
 To get well basted, and to teach the rogues
 The sin of straying from the one true fold—
 Shepherds were then most careful of their flocks !
 The varlets ! Sickly sheep were “heretics”
 Miscalled “blasphemers” who perversely chose
 To seek for truth, and find it in God’s Word—
 The cure they underwent was somewhat strange !
 How Satan’s company could ever prove
 A cure for blasphemy is past belief,
 Unless upon the homœopathic plan
 Where “like cures like,” and the fierce oaths of friends
 Can work amendment in the speech of men !
 We can’t suppose the demon, like the Dean,
 Minds the “Queen’s English,” or could ever prove
 An apt “Professor of Humanities,”
 As our shrewd brothers say, across the Tweed.
 The remedies in vogue in those queer days
 Were prompt and sharp and hot, and made by fire,
 With fagots and the stake, and torture first
 And shirts of yellow blazon’d o’er with imps !—
 Those that would sing their *palinodiam*,† might
 Be treated to a rope, and strangled off,
 Or lose all rights, with “lifelong infamy !”—
 This grisly cruelty of darker times
 Was but the outgrowth of impatient pride,
 Love of dictation, avarice, or lust.

* “To deliver such an one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh” (1 Cor. v. 5, 2 Cor. ii. 5, and vii. 12, etc.) meant simply solemn, but not necessarily perpetual, exclusion from Church privileges.

† Recantation.

Bigots are shallow—Those who persecute
Have small convictions, and must hate the light,
Because the quest of Truth is troublesome.
By slow degrees the human mind arrives
At firm persuasions, and can sympathise
With those who grope for knowledge by the help
Of dawning knowledge, and a firm resolve
To hold the treasure fast when once it's found.
Thus staunch Believers are most tolerant.
They do "rejoice in Truth," feel charity
For those who toil along the devious ways,
The dim-lit paths of speculative lore,
And seek some rock, some "anchor of the soul,"
On which to fix the heart's eternal hopes.
Thus the Great Teacher evermore was kind ;
The heavy-laden gladly came to Him,
Nought but pretence provoked His patient love ;
None were cast out adrift upon despair—
So, like "beloved" John, upon His breast,
All trusting souls shall find their long-sought rest !




THE AFTERGLOW.



WHEN great men die their failings are forgot,
If only honest purpose was their aim ;
The instinct of mankind remembers that
Few, very few who've greatness at their feet,
Have strength or nerve to climb the slippery rungs
Of its most dizzy ladder up to fame.
If all grew really great, where were renown ?
Heaven would itself be quite monotonous,
Did star not differ from its brother stars
In Glory—But God loves variety—
He never made two creatures just alike.

Resemblance strong is not identity—
No leaves, no grains of sand are quite the same ;
And as for men—Is not each separate man
A fresh creation of high, Sovereign Will
Which ever joys in grand diversity ?
Each single note in the vast harmony
Which Nature sings to God, might be alone
Perhaps a discord ; but He blends all things
Into a chorus of unjarring praise
Which celebrates His Wisdom in His works—
Thus Providence all-wise itself ordains
That some men should attain to greater things
And more renown than fall to common folk.
And so it comes to pass that savages
Alone cast dirt upon a great man's grave,
Or wrangle in the presence of the dead.
When men are living men, lithesome and strong,
Nature ordains they should as rivals meet,
And fight life's battles in a manly way.
So grieves the athlete long inured to dare
A worthy foeman on th' arena's sand,
Who sometimes throws, and then at times gets thrown—
Oh, how he grieves to hear that nevermore
He'll meet that mighty, brave antagonist
With whom it was an honour to contend !
All bitterness is past—He only weeps
To think a " Prince is fallen," a great man dead !
He truly mourns, and lays the choicest wreath
Which he knows how to cull, upon the bier—
Yes, this is why the Afterglow of life
Often excels in pensive loveliness
The sterner hues of its meridian prime.
The generous fingers of Forgetfulness
Blot out all blurs, all failings, lesser faults,
Whilst fond Regret before the picture sits,
And holds her taper up to beautify
And show the greatness of the mighty dead !

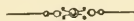
ADVANCING AGE.

T is no use for those who've seen the prime,
Nay, not of joy, but of afflictive cares,
Though not so old in years, but old in grief,
To fancy, when the troublous days are past,
That a keen world will wrinkles overlook,
And take no note of grey-besprinkled hairs.
Good heavens above ! If it were left to man,
There'd be no wisdom in a world of youth—
None would grow old or gain experience !
But Providence has ordered otherwise,
That men may learn that here is not their rest.
The teeth of gnawing anguish will leave scars
Upon the mind, although they bleed no more—
The cancer's cured—It does not burn and scald,
With quivering shooting smarts as in years gone ;
But yet the white and jagged seams of grief
Remain for ever ineffaceable
Upon Contentment's once unwrinkled brow !
Times change with us, and we, alas ! with them.
We think we yet are young, and capable
Of doing things which once we could do well ;
But when we seek to do them, what avails
The jaunty air, the gay resolve, the pluck
That were embellishments of what we did
Without much effort in our younger days ?
They now scarce serve to varnish o'er defeat !
Heroic deeds of body or of mind,
Great deeds of strength, of bold audacity
Demand, at least in ordinary men,
That they should have their nerves unshattered by
The wearing fever of continual care.
By constant strain the stoutest bow gets warped.

Some men there are whose mighty souls surmount
All contradiction, all calamities ;
Who, clutching Fortune's wheel with their last strength,
Hold on just long enough to be whirled off
Into the lap of blind Prosperity.
Prosperity herself is quite as much
Amazed, we doubt not, as these iron men,
That she should dandle on her knees such folk ;
But these strange turns occur to very few.
Most men are not born heroes—Rare they are
Who, like the hippopotamus, have hides
Which trouble's darts and disappointment's stings
Are far too weak to vex, much more to pierce !
When the bold eagle's eyes grow dim with years,
He still remains as full of fierce resolve
To fly in turbulent, hot, whirring haste
Through the crisp airs, above the mountain tops,
As when he first sped forth from crag-built nest,
And spied his prey below, and pounced on it
With the quick glitter of a thunderbolt !
But failure makes e'en him distrust his powers—
His whirlwind wings are now not quite so fleet ;
He sees the hare or lamb in distance dim,
But when he swoops—Behold, the prey is gone.
His once unerring eyes have played him false !
Ah !—One such miss suffices to unhinge
The confidence in self that does brave deeds—
We think before we leap, and so fall short !

Happy it is that Nature compensates
Declining strength, and energies impaired,
By larger, wiser views of men and things,
And by the steadier glow of Wisdom's lamp
Trimmed by the hand of ripe Experience !
The strong may conquer empires with the sword ;
'Tis easier far to conquer than to keep ;
And when the sword is sheathed the task begins,
The real task which calmer heads work out.

Youth is the soldier, but Old Age secures
The dear-bought conquests, in the Senate House.
The mellow light that in the binnacle
Shines on the needle, guides the mightiest fleets
Safe through the rocks and waves of winter's storms.
The silent flash of the sagacious lamp,
The slow revolving spark far out at sea
Does more to benefit mankind, although
It speaks at fitful intervals—does more
Than red volcanoes' lurid, boastful glow.
Volcanoes burn, destroy, and desolate—
The light-ship beacon cheers, and leads men home !



BY A PERPETUAL DECREE.



WITH swashing, swishing, hissing snarls,
In rolls the tide, on mischief bent !
Yet, by the sandgirt pebbly shore,
Back to the sea it's baffled sent !

The waves may storm, the surf may foam ;
Billows declaim, and tempests shriek ;
But yet, against loose shingle stones,
And grains of sand, their force is weak !

Why is atomic sand so firm ?
Can pebbles curb the breakers rude ?
By God's decree they are ordained,
In silent strength and fortitude !

Learn from the sea-shore sands, ye souls—
Ye timorous souls, learn from the beach,
That wildest, rudest, howling waves
Their bounds can never overreach !

Trouble may press, dangers may storm ;
Waves may leap up, and clap their hands ;
God rules the boastful waterfloods—
They cannot pass their barrier sands !

MISUNDERSTOOD.




HE idle man deserves no sympathy,
 His vacant hours are dedicate to sloth.
 His torpid spirit basks in indolence ;
 The listless fingers of his craven soul
 Are too benumbed with self-indulgent sleep
 To pluck the fruit that ripens at his door.
 That man were lonesome in the streets of Heaven.
 The tongues of angels could not interest him—
 Their burning zeal to do the kind behests
 Of ever-wakeful, watchful Providence,
 Would chafe the sluggard into stark despair !

No, 'tis the man whose thoughts are all on fire,
 Whose spirit yearns to benefit mankind,
 Whose rare, well-pondered schemes misunderstood,
 Or damned unheard by a self-seeking age,
 Are mocked as mad—as visionary waifs
 From the dim realms of mist-bound phantasy ;
 This, this is he for whom the laggard world,
 The fit abode of smirking self-conceit,
 Seems full of emptiness. Like eagle chained
 To the sad precincts of a wired cage,
 He frets and pines to bathe his eager wings
 In the keen airs, the crisp, pure atmosphere
 Of crystal space where other eagles soar !


Call not the eagle idle who is doomed
 To pine away his days a captive bird,
 Though king of all the birds that fly through air !
 Unbar his cage—He will not mope, nor lag
 To seek his compeers on the cloud-topped cliffs—
 The mightiest soul must ever lonesome be,
 Cut off from kindred souls and sympathy !

THE BROAD ARROW.

EEK not, fond mortal, to inscribe thy name
Upon the passing clouds, or shifting winds!
The ospray* cannot find the wave again
Which bore aloft its glittering prize, the fish;
The sea-shore pilgrim prints his foot in vain
On the smooth sands, for tides to wash away.
The breeze that fans us so caressingly,
As though it had true being, goes its way,
And leaves no trace to mark its fickle course!
The things we touch and fondle, call our own,
And almost think too real to decay,
Elude us first, and vanish into space,
So that we scarce recall what shape they were!
God's hand alone, on transitoriness
Can mark abidingly His awful Name
With the swift finger of eternal change,
So that the world may read His attributes
Writ at full length upon the lightning's flash,
Broidered in hoar-frost on each jewelled spray,
Stamped by His footstep on the changeful tides!
All things proclaim that power belongs to God—
Earth, sea, and sky are marked indelibly
With the Broad Arrow of His sovereignty,
And lonesomeness is but the plenitude
Of omnipresent, all-controlling Power!


* The sea-eagle.

THE MATRON.

HEY say "she's past her prime," because her step
 Is more majestic in her womanhood,
 Than when she tripped along, a blithesome girl.
 But look at her!—She blooms with that best charm,
 The charm of ripened innocence which knows
 How to guard others from the nameless snares
 Through which she walked herself, but shunned them all,
 With the pure instinct which the sunbeam shows,
 That draws up wholesome dew from this dank earth,
 But passes from the world pure, undefiled,
 Back to the sun, who sent it forth to shine,
 At God's command, on good and bad alike!

'Tis not the rose-branch beautiful with buds,
 It is the blossom-laden tree that fills
 The air with fragrance that enchants the world,
 Buds are but promise—Roses vows fulfilled!

"MOTHER DEAR!"

ASK not much, but yet I ask the world,
 For thou art all the spacious world to me!
 I ask thyself—thy ever gentle smile
 That fills the very atmosphere with rest—
 Thou art my sunshine, my reviving dew—
 The sparkling fount at which my spirit drinks,
 And quaffs new vigour at each several draught—
 Thy converse charms my melancholy mood,

And puts despondency itself to rout,
Retunes the unstrung fibres of my heart,
Braces my courage—bids me draw the shaft
Of lofty thought up to the glittering barb,
And launch it whirring at the mark of Fame !—
Before thy presence, like the kindling dawn,
The homeliest things put on new comeliness—
Rebuked by witnessing thy children's love,
As though their "MOTHER DEAR !" were talisman
That puts ill-omened things at once to flight,
Envy, abashed, creeps to Detraction's cave,
Where the curst sisterhood of Malice born
Conceal themselves till darkness walks abroad,
And muttering doze, awaiting night's return !

DESPONDENCY.



ROLLING, anxious sea of troublous thought !
O sea of joyless grey, from whose dark deeps,
Wan sorrows rise on crests of ghostly foam,
And sink to reappear on other waves,
Like spirits seeking rest and finding none !
Despondency ! When will the sobs and sighs—
The hollow moaning of thy winds and tides
Cease to oppress—to weigh my spirit down ?

My soul would spread her wings—would fain take flight
Above thy vapours that shut sunlight out.
Oh ! that some angel sent to comfort men
Would take his course across thy torpid gulf,
And from his crown, his crown of flowers, let fall
One single leaf—one little spray of hope !
Then would the fogs roll back, the clouds disperse,
The sullen waters, that appear morose,

Would sparkle with delight. The breezes too
 Would cease to moan, and leap in mirthful scuds
 Across the crisp, blue, laughing, shimmering waves,
 And I—yes I should pass, from grief to joy.
 Oh! I adjure thee, cheerful sun shine out,
 And put the armies of despair to rout!

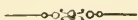


THE END OF GRIEF.



SPEAK not of friendships dead, but yet embalmed,
 Enshrined in hearts long desolate but true!
 Speak not of days that long have faded out—
 Skies grey with sorrow, flecked with transient gleams
 Of fitful, flashing, dancing, spectral light!
 O life of man! How like the northern skies,
 Whose winter-months, so many and so long,
 Are only cheered by the Aurora's flash,
 By the Aurora's petulant outbursts
 Of fiery crimson, hurtling through the sky,
 Noiseless and warmthless as the flickering stars.
 Speak not of days that long have faded out!
 E'en Nova Zembla and the granite coasts
 Of Labrador have their short summertide.
 Summer!—ah, yes, in which the pitying sun
 Sets not at all, but shines both night and day,
 And bids those almost God-forsaken cliffs,
 And frost-enchanted plains to wait in hope,
 Until a cycle comes of mightier good,
 And pinching want and cold shall be no more.
 Then thunder on, ye vast Atlantic waves!
 Blow hurricanes—ye earthquakes rend and tear—
 Thou ruffian Frost torment the shivering babes—
 Bereavement torture—Pestilence destroy!
 There is a Litany which mounts to God
 From every crevice of the groaning earth—

Kyrie Eleison! all creation chants—
“Oh God, have mercy on the helpless ones!”
Groans are but Collects—sobs grief’s strong Amens;
Tears but the beads of Anguish’s rosary,
And God’s all-seeing eye—all-hearing ear,
His all-embracing, patient Fatherhood
Has marked the time—has fixed the day and hour;
And then, in endless rest the Prince of Peace
Shall give the grief-bound earth its great release!



A DREAM OF SUMMERTIDE.



LOOKING-GLASS sea and a fleckless sky,
A glinting, glittering, gold-spun haze,
A humming of bees, and a wafted scent
Of blossoms that bask in the sun’s warm rays!
A warbling of larks, and a distant low
Of dappled kine in the far-off plains,
The milkmaid’s song, and the creak of wheels,
In the village street, of the rustic wains!
A rustle of leaves, and the coaxing sigh
Of the West-wind stirring the half-ripe ears,
Unveiling the poppies in scarlet state
Like warriors waving their shapely spears!
A glow of health, and of life renewed,
A bounding pulse and a beating heart—
Oh, simple enjoyments of trusting youth,
Like Summer’s morning, ye soon depart!
Then Winter comes with its cold, chill rains,
With its blinding sleets and its drifted snow;
With cruel, relentless, killing frosts,
When the stars shine bright, and the East-winds blow!
Fix not your hopes on a world of change—
Think not to live in a world of death!
Joy is a bird of passage here—
Life is unhinged by a sigh or breath!

SYMPATHY.



THAT is a heart bereft of sympathy,
 Yet scarce bereft of what it seldom knew ?
 What music slumbers in the unswept chords
 Of the neglected lute ? Let cunning hand,
 And voice long silent but too dearly loved,
 Awake its trance of tuneless, lonesome grief,
 Or let e'en stranger who has wit to charm
 Its timid strings so full of coy caprice,
 Invite and coax to sweet garrulity,
 Oh, how it trembles to the kindly touch,
 And tells its joy in sounds of liquid fire !—
 What is the heart bereft of sympathy ?—
 Oft full of burning thoughts that would leap forth,
 And, like the comet-stars career through space,
 Shine through all lands, and ever leave behind
 A train of beauty to delight the world !
 Ye uncultured flowers that in the wilderness
 Are by the tyrant Sun compelled to bloom,
 To fade unseen, or by the wild beast's foot
 To be down-trodden, trampled in the dust,
 No passer-by, no child of man regards
 With grateful joy your matchless, radiant hues !—
 This be at least your one consoling thought,
 That angel-forms that fly from Paradise,
 Bound on swift errands from the throne of God,
 Pause to admire the alchemy divine
 That fills a vase so fair with scents so sweet.
 Oh, Sympathy !—E'en vivid words of hate
 Are better far than soulless, dumb neglect—
 See yon two thunder-clouds approach for war,
 Each charged with tempest, eloquent with strife—
 The crashing peals that roll among the hills

Speak to a listening world in tongues of flame—
 Flint kindles flint, though each mishapen stone
 In fiery words could not discourse alone!

LITTLE JOYS.



ALL men to *Eldorado* hope to come!
 A little world, a microcosm just made
 Expressly for themselves, they picture forth:
 Some sunlit height which yet they hope to scale—
 Some far-off island of untroubled joy—
 Some perfect clime where winds are never harsh—
 Where heat and thirst, and feverish cares and grief,
 And sorrow's troublous shadows enter not!
 Such are the day-dreams of our golden youth,
 And e'en of early manhood's sanguine prime.
 We feel that we have strength to do large deeds—
 We know exactly, so we think, what things
 Would make us blest; on these we set our hearts;
 And some live long enough to win the prize.
 They fight—they strive—they wrestle with the world—
 But when the world is floored and at their feet,
 And Victory calls them to receive the crown,
 It does not glitter as once far away—
 They're oft ashamed to wear what they have won,
 Or cannot wear it, for their lot is changed,
 And grief has stolen ambition from their hearts!—
 What is a diadem, when laid upon
 The bier of one with whom we thought to share
 The happiness of seeing each other great?
 The sweetest flowers—the most refreshing fruits
 Come not from far, but by the wayside grow,
 Like primroses, and those wild strawberries
 Which thirsty wayfarers stoop down and pick,
 And bless the gracious hand of Providence
 That cheers the pilgrim's path with little joys.

THE QUEST OF JOY.



THINK not, in lands where skies are always blue,
And airs are warm, and the lithe, boastful surfs
Leap evermore across the coral reefs,
Like snow-wreaths flaunting in the tropic sun
That has no power to melt their beauteousness—
Think not, that where the graceful palm-tree waves
Festooned with vines and flowers of gorgeous hue,
And glittering birds flit through the woods and fields—
Think not that DEATH is never busy there,
And dull-eyed SORROW never hopeless weeps !—
JOY has no proper home in the wide world,
And at the princely gates of emperors,
CARE and BEREAVEMENT, weary sentinels,
Pace to and fro, with unremitting tread,
Loth to admit MIRTH e'en as a guest !
Oft MIRTH herself returns dissolved in tears
From the proud halls where mortals think JOY reigns—
JOY had departed, and the stately rooms,
The gilded corridors were dimly closed,
And no glad colours through the painted glass
Danced as of yore upon the marble floors !
Ah me ! A weary, weary pilgrimage
Lies before him, who roams in quest of PEACE ;
And PLEASURE, like the wild bird on its nest,
Flits from its home, at sound of stranger's tread—
To take the prize at all, it must be slain !—
Contentment dies when once within our reach,
And like a golden chain that lacks the clasp,
It slips away from round the wearer's neck—
Those things elude us which we covet most !

SUNSET.



SAW the blood-red sun go down
Beneath the brimming sea ;
All nature seemed to wear a crown
Of Immortality !

Tipp'd was each solemn mountain peak
With tongues of ruby fire,
Pregnant with thoughts that angels speak
In their celestial choir !

The western sky was all aflame
With amethystine light,
And rosy cloudlets went and came
Seraphically bright.

Each glistening vapour seemed to float
On wings of blinding gold ;
Each distant tree and rock remote
Assumed a faery mould.

'Twas as the gate of Heaven were there,
And the angelic host,
In burnished panoply, repair
To guard its glittering coast !

But soon the tired king of day
Sank 'neath the voiceless waves ;
Each flashing glory stole away
Like spirits to their graves.

Abroad in spectral beauty sailed
The evening's crescent queen—
The witch-like Moon, with charms unveiled,
And robes of silver sheen.

And legions of attendant stars
Their shining lamps on high
Lit up, as mounting to their cars,
They roamed the trackless sky !

No longer voiceless was the sea,
 No longer mute the breeze,
 The night-wind sighed caressingly,
 And rustled in the trees !
 A briny odour from the deep
 Passed o'er the slumbering world ;
 The waters woke as if from sleep
 In crispèd wavelets curled !
 O fickle-bosomed, trackless sea,
 Symbol of mortal life !
 Thy slumbering waves shall kindled be,
 By the first blast, to strife !
 O moonlit, fragrance-breathing deep—
 Fit type of boundless rest,
 How many weary myriads sleep
 Clasped to thy heaving breast !



THE DEATH OF WINTER.



WINTER'S pale, livid brow is marked with death ;
 But no one pities him who loved to kill
 All that was lovely, beautiful and sweet !
 Great Heaven is just, and no repentance now
 Will turn aside the tyrant's well-earned fate.
 He joyed to torture with a lingering death,
 And watch his martyrs pine away and fade,
 But now, abhorred by all, he slowly dies !
 Yes, Heaven is just—We reap as we have sown.
 Oppression, wrong, malignity and spite
 Prosper awhile. But after that, a cloud
 Of never-ending, baffled hopelessness
 Creeps o'er the cruel man, like a curst spell
 That turns his heart to stone—drives out all joy,
 And dooms him never more to feel the sun

Of happiness within his blighted soul,
But to consort with fiends from those dim plains,
Those weary fields of ever-drifting sands
Which Mercy's footprints never yet have marked
To lead the merciless to realms of Hope !



DRIVELLING.



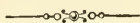
RIVEL is well intentioned—drivellers
Like the soft coneys, are a "feeble folk,"
They nibble things, but seldom masticate.
Their microcosm is peopled with mere dwarfs ;
Like the inverted glass, they make things small.
But what a gift they have for teasing folks !
They are the midges sent to vex mankind—
They buzz and trumpet in their gnat-like way,
Making all round them restless as themselves.
Your driv'ller, if he comes to make a call,
And forces you to lay aside your pen,
And leave your study, much against the grain,
Has scarce sat down, before he must be gone !
This restless emptiness so aggravates,
That it might drive a Job to swear at large.
A drivelling male is always bad enough,
But a she-driv'ller is a thing of dread !
She has no conscience—no propriety—
No woman's sense of the ridiculous—
Without perception, she goes stumbling on,
Driving folks mad at her inane discourse—
And yet she is quite happy in herself,
No curt sarcasm can ever cut her short !
She'd even call the Bishop out of church
To kill a spider or admire a snail,
Had she not been decorously brought up—
We'd almost said she joyed in giving pain,

But fiends and cats alone torment their prey ;
 She's neither cat, nor fiend—good, simple soul !
 And never takes rebuff or quiz to heart—
 Unruffled, calm, cool as a cucumber,
 Whilst you are fuming, ready to break out,
 She smiles, and chirrups like a dickey-bird,
 And brings out home-made presents, scraps, and shreds
 Of tissue-paper, ribbon-ends, and paste ;
 Or worse than all, blurred, smeary little daubs,
 Crude sketches by the hopeful brood at home,*
 Presenting them with comic, stately pride !—
 Such are the nauseous gifts that tadpoles bring
 From “sense of duty” to their kindred fry—
 The pond is reeking with the self-same stuff ;
 But yet there's merit in the gift itself,
 It is “home-made, and very plain,” like cake
 With which mammas regale young visitors,
 When plum-cake stands beside it on the board ! †
 But when the tadpoles have turned into frogs,
 And learned to jump in knowledge as in space,
 The frogs perverse retain their tadpole views,
 And still opine, “there's nothing like the pond !”—
 Such gifts your bland tormentress sidles out
 From her dread reticule, with knowing winks !—
 On “children's dress” she is magnificent,
 Although such guys as hers ne'er scared the world ;
 The boys like little girls—the girls, poor things,
 Long-tailed, and trapped like horses in a hearse,
 A suffering to themselves, a laughing-stock
 To every one who sees them out of doors—

* The spontaneous gift of a little child, like its first misspelt letters, is above price. Happy are they who are so favoured as to attract to themselves the love of little children. But a childish gift from an adult savours of insult or imbecility, or both together. A little one's estimate of character is not lightly to be set aside, or overlooked.


† Will such discreet matrons never learn common humanity in the distribution of their refreshments ? The writer is free to confess that in his juvenile days the very mention of “plain cake,” under circumstances such as are described above, awakened feelings of resentment akin to the risings of justifiable homicide !

But banter never alters Madam's views ;
As she chirps on, you're like to split your sides,
But cannot bear to hurt the trustful soul—
To cut my story short, she-driv'llers are
Superb at correspondence. All their notes,
Crossed and recrossed, are over-weighted with
Some lumbering trash cut from the newspapers,
Thumb'd pamphlets, shreddings for their "little friends,"
Which cost you extra postage every time—
How savagely you blame the code polite
(Whilst to the basket you consign the trash)
That has forbidden sounding expletives !—
Don't think it enmity, or mean revenge
For some infliction quite unbearable,
That we of driv'ling pests have said so much—
We have no enemies, or they'd be such !



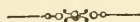
TAKEN BY ASSAULT.



 HERE was no "sound of revelry by night ;"
The anxious city slept its broken sleep ;
The river rolled in solemn darkness on,
And all was gloom, save when the scudding clouds
Drifting aside, unveiled the rainy moon,
And showed the rushes bending to the wind,
With fitful glimpses of the bastioned town,
And the white-tented camps of friend and foe !—
No voice was heard save sentry's challenge-call,
Or cry of wild-bird in the sedgy pools ;
No sound, but stifled cough of lone vedette
Wrapped in his cloak, upon his patient steed—
Thus waned the night, till one by one the clocks
Chimed out the hour of twelve ; and then a plash
Of muffled oars came stealing through the gloom !


One moment more, and from the citadel
A gun flashed out !—The ramparts took it up,
And each deep-throated cannon woke to strife !
Shrill trumpets brayed—the drummers beat to arms—
The tumbrils rolled—the air was filled with sounds
Of trampling horses, and of rumbling wheels,
Of voices of command, and rifle-shots
Which girt the city with a belt of fire !
Within the streets the shrieking bombshells crashed ;
Above the roofs the hissing rockets flared—
By three o'clock on that grim morn of March,
The breach was entered, and the town was won ;
Yet *hardly* won, for in each lane and street,
From roof and housetop, in the market-place,
The stubborn townsfolk made despairing stand !
Their wives and children fought like things possessed
And plied the struggling foe with boiling pitch,
With red-hot hoops, with massive furniture ;
Yet none craved quarter from the brutal hordes
Who strove with reckless fury, till they'd won—
Then came a scene like Scio's butchery,
Or the most Christian sack of Magdeburg !—
With ripping kandjar, and with stabbing spear,
With yataghan, and knife, and blunderbuss,
With every tool of torture and of death,
The yelling hosts rushed in, a panting mob,
Trampling each other down in furious haste ;
Circassians, Turks, Arnauts and wolf-like Kurds,
Bashibazooks, grim, lithesome Bedouins,
Hot-blooded cut-throats from the tepid Nile,
With red-fezzed renegado miscreants—
Marauders all, and practised sons of hell
Raving, blaspheming, each foul brute agog
For Christian beauty, or for Christian blood ;
They all rushed in and spread themselves abroad !
The tongue refuses to rehearse the tale,
The oaths, the cries, entreaties and despair,

The horrid joy, the abject wretchedness,
The crimes of cruelty and deeds of shame—
Suffice to say, Christian ambition gave
The wanton challenge to the Pagan hosts,
And they avenged themselves with fire and blood !



THE SACKED TOWN.



 HE fight is over, and the night comes down
Upon the deep-scarred fields, and smoking town !
Roofs falling in, and flaring homes denote
The vengeful wrath with which the tempest smote ;
The church is wrecked, the carillon is gone,
The clock has stopped, the belfry smoulders on.
The night is gusty, and the fierce east-wind
Spreads smoke that stifles, and hot sparks that blind.
The hostile hosts have done their work and gone,
Leaving their dead for kites to feed upon ;
Though here and there, at a sacked tavern's door,
Some drowsy victor lies with tipsy snore,
Too drunk to plunder, too worn-out to strike,
To wield a rifle, or to push a pike—
The gluttoned dogs of war have lost their zest,
And sated Rapine sleeps on Ruin's breast !—
The snow is falling in the torn-up street,
And shrouds the mangled slain as winding-sheet.
The kine un milked are seen in every lane,
Seeking the shelter of their byre in vain.
Wan, limping chargers roam the market-place,
Or whinnying, gaze at their dead master's face !
How fare the townsfolk ?—Ravished, slain, or fled ;
The hapless wounded praise the happier dead !—
The place was taken by assault, and sacked,
And not one jot of horrid carnage lacked.
Asylums perished, and the gibbering mad

Gloated oe'r scenes to make a Moloch sad.
Sick folk crawl'd round in destitution dire,
Driven from their beds of pain by smoke and fire.
The hospitals were plundered, gutted, stormed ;
And in the highways deathstruck wretches swarmed,
Delirious, drunken, horrible to see ;
Some roaring prayers, and others blasphemy !
Here mangled corpses reeked, and here again
Bundles of jagged flesh that once were men.
Woods were cut down, and windmills set aflame,
In all the wantonness of war's mad game ;
And, as the captors marched away in haste
From once a smiling town, but now a waste,
No thought they took for those poor souls they left
Dishonour'd, beggar'd, of their all bereft ;
Crippled, distraught, women gone mad with fright,
Babes left to die, or shift as best they might—
Yet this is GLORY !—and when once the wire
Had flashed the tidings home so grimly dire,
Beacons were lit, and parish-bells were rung,
Thanksgivings ordered, and *Te Deums* sung !
None took least thought of murder'd men, by scores
Hung up as spies, before their cottage doors ;
Their only crime—they loved their homes too well,
And helped their glorious sons who fighting fell !
None dared to weep, or mar the general glee,
Or speak a word of human sympathy
For those who'd lost their all, and knew no more
Of the true objects of that wicked war,
Than the poor abject beasts that moaning stood
Before their ruined cribs, in want of food !—
War may be lawful, if in self-defence ;
But for Ambition's wars there's no pretence.
A tyrant's whim, a despot's mad caprice
Should not be able to disturb the peace ;
And Christian lands should put their *veto* on
The hideous freaks that cursed the times bygone !

THE SOUND WITHOUT A NAME.



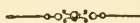
LONG-DRAWN surging of the restless seas!
 O sound without a name, too mighty for
 Language to speak, or human tongue to frame !
 The Mind of Him alone who listens to
 The waterfloods of every distant clime,
 And hears, and tunes at once the thund'rous waves
 Of all upheaving oceans to His praise,
 His all-embracing Mind alone can speak
 The infinitely great, in tongueless tones !—
 Doubtless thou hast a name tho' hid with God ;
 We can compare thee to the thunder's roll,
 To crashing peals of heaven's artillery,
 Or to the blast that sweeps the forest trees ;
 But, with comparison the soul is fain
 To rest content, in baffled, wondering awe !
 It has no word for thy tumultuous tones ;
 'Tis vain attempt to span the measureless
 With the small grasp of childhood's feeble hand !
 Thy voice was eloquent, before the tongue
 Of man ere woke the echoes of our world ;
 Thou speak'st the language of the hoary past,
 The self-same speech with which archaic seas
 Chanted God's praise, when dry land first appeared,
 And tides first broke rejoicing on the beach !

COLOURLESSNESS.



HERE are some folks, at first sight, colourless ;
 Devoid of attributes, without a charm ;
 A kind of fungus on the human stock ;
 But yet, like mushrooms, full of piquancy,

Imparting savour when combined aright ;
 And having gifts peculiarly their own,
 And though not ornamental, never bores.
 Some latent talent lurks beneath the plain,
 Uncouth outside of unobtrusiveness,
 Which when it's wanted, nothing can replace.
 It is not dulness gives that rayless tinge,
 That whitey-brownness to these harmless folks—
 Like remedies for burns, they're not in vogue,
 Except occasion calls for instant use ;
 And yet be sure, beneath that quaint reserve,
 That shy withdrawal from the brisk parterre
 Of flaunting vapidness and giddy show,
 There beat true human hearts, with all the fire
 Of noblest passions, which alone demand
 The breath of sympathy to make them burn,
 And set them all aflame with kindly zeal
 To do such deeds as they alone can do.
 How many springs run buried underground—
 But call them forth.—They leap abroad to bless
 And make a garden of the wilderness !



SILENT MEDITATION.



HE downcast heart is never less alone
 When Memory lights her torch, and spreads
 a glow
 Of tender radiance over scenes bygone,
 Recalling angels to their haunts below !

This is not solitude—'tis perfect bliss ;
 An hour for timid souls to bask awhile
 In the glad thought, that a harsh world like this
 Has times unmocked to weep, ungrudged to smile !

Give me the stillness of the solemn night,
To wander in the starlight far afield,
When garish day has sped its fickle flight,
And Silence casts round Grief its wondrous shield !

How soothing 'tis to pensive ones to note
The amber sunset fade behind the trees,
To mark the clouds in ruby glories float
Home to the mighty sea, upon the breeze !

To watch the planets on their flaming cars,
Like angel chieftains rushing on to war ;
To mark their peerless course amongst the stars,
And note their flashing armour from afar.


To trace the Milky Way, with wondering eyes,
Like martial high-road through the upper spheres ;
With tread of seraphs' feet it glowing lies,
Heaven's clashing minstrelsy one almost hears

Who calls this lonesomeness is but a fool ;
His portion is the swirling scene of day ;
But holy stillness is Heaven's vestibule
Where all God's wearied ones resort to pray !




MAKING GAME OF A DONKEY.




RADITION tells, when centuries ago
There were no asses in the Low Countries,
A Flemish boor tramped in his wooden shoes
Along the road to Germany, and met
A lad upon an ass, and awe-struck, cried
“ *Sancta Maria !* What gigantic hares
These Germans have, that they can ride on them !
Yes, it's a hare—I know it by its ears—
But though a hare, its pace is very slow ! ”
Such hares in Flanders may be seen to-day,
But when first introduced we cannot say.

GLEAMS OF SUNSHINE.

 HERE are places and times that we'd gladly
 forget,
 So full of vexation and care ;
 But grateful remembrance soft whispers that yet
 Kind hands and brave hearts linger there !
 'Tis thus that the wild storms of springtide have gleams
 That shine through its passionate tears :
 The brook in the desert its harshness redeems
 And its desolate bleakness endears !
 The pilgrim o'ertaken by tempest stays not
 To gaze, whilst the thunder-cloud lowers ;
 When the rain-flood is o'er, and the thunder forgot,
 He has time to rejoice in the flowers !
 So the darkest, most sombre, tempestuous days
 But a moment God's goodness obscure ;
 When the trouble is past, in glad wonder we gaze
 On His mercies that ever endure !

DAYBREAK.

 OW dawning wakes the gently slumb'ring skies,
 That blush and kindle at his genial call,
 Although the valley still in darkness dreams,
 And rolling mists enshroud the mountains tall !
 The night is passing, and the stars grow dim ;
 Yet, in the river shines the waning moon ;
 Still sobbing grief at last has fallen asleep,
 And pity watches lest she wake too soon !

No insect swarms yet fill the chilly air ;
The fishes torpid lie among the reeds ;
Night-flying moths and beetles still are seen,
And hooting owls flit homewards through the meads !

The scudding hares still scamper through the corn ;
And Reynard prowls the poultry yards around,
With stealthier footsteps as it lighter grows,
And stops to listen at the faintest sound !

The wakeful clocks, and watchful minster-chimes
As ever sleepless, tell of coming day,
Which on the threshold stands to call the sun,
And bid him chase the things of night away !

Mysterious Daybreak ! Harbinger of dread
To countless thousands of the waiting world,
Pale janitor of day, what wilt thou bring,
When sunrise shows his crimson flag unfurled ?

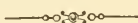


SWAGGER.



TO look important is the butler's place,
And he who keeps one, ought to feel relieved
From all, except vicarious swaggering ;
Just as the flunkey does the thund'rous knock
That tells how great a man waits at the door !
Your real heroes are oft little men,
Of nervous presence, insignificant,
So unpretending that they're overlooked
Amidst the mob of self-proclaiming folk.
They know they're great, and it suffices them
To take precedence when occasion comes ;
But till they're wanted, they'd be unobserved—
The pushing fulsomeness of vulgar men
Their noisy, fussy over-courtesy

They take at what it's worth—for well they know,
 Such people only seek to show themselves
 In light reflected from their famous friends—
 No doubt the children of the parish-schools
 Form their ideas of the better world
 From what they see at church, and picture forth
 The blest departed, in churchwarden's pews
 Curtain'd with damask-red, silent, apart,
 But yet, obtrusively conspicuous,
 And guarded by those mitred, crown-topped sticks
 Which local dignitaries bear in state
 Before the Bishop, when he comes to preach.
 Such quaint parade at times has need to be,
 But oft repeated is vulgarity !



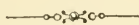
D Y I N G.

A F R A G M E N T.



H wake me not ! Speak softly, for my soul
 Is fluttering forth into a golden land
 Of wondrous ecstasy and noiseless bliss—
 Sleep steals upon me ! Not the sleep of earth,
 But a soft trance, and yet reality.
 Recall me not. Pronounce my name no more,
 Till I am quite untrammell'd, and set free
 From hearing, sight, and consciousness of pain—
 Draw close the curtains ! Shut the sunlight out—
 My eyes are dim, and yet my spirit sees
 A thousand forms which fancy shadowed forth,
 And which I recognise as living shapes
 That used to visit me in waking dreams,
 Or in the visions of the sleeping state—
 Farewell, gross earth ! Farewell, ye baffling chains
 That tied me down, and bound me to the wheels
 Of dull routine, and workday's lumbering car—
 The bonds are severed—I am free at last !

My eyes are open, and a boundless field
Spreads out before me, vast, horizonless,
I know at last what is eternity,
How measureless the life beyond the grave,
And what it is to have no fear of change !



MOPING.



WAKE up, ye craven souls that fret and shiver,
As though the sunshine had no heat nor ray !
Shake off the clammy coils of earth-born vapours,
And walk exulting in the light of day !

The world is not made up of peevish sadness,
Untempered sorrow is not all our doom.
The nightingale sings with a plaintive sweetness,
Although its song-time is the evening gloom !

Its notes are echoes of bygone rejoicing,
And what has been shall surely come again ;
Requited love has known its hours of anguish,
And what is happiness but rest from pain !

We cannot tell—we know not—ah, we know not
What makes us happy !—'Tis a scent or breath
Borne swiftly past us on the wings of angels,
A waft of Heaven breathed on a world of death !

But yet there are soft, calm, ecstatic moments
When all earth's griefs seem swallowed up in bliss ;
The worn-down, fretted soul then flutters upwards,
In beatific worlds forgetting this !

Wake up, then, grieving ones, and mope no longer—
Spread fancy's pinions—Flit abroad a space !
The butterfly with folded wings looks sombre,
But on its flight, a miracle of grace !

OUT ON THE MOORS.



HE swallows cease to fly before the gale !
The water-rats alone, with fearless thrift,
Go on collecting for their winter home—*

Pity the vagrant out upon the moors
Ill-clad, unsheltered from the coming storm !
Far as the eye can reach, no farm, no hut ;
No boat upon the lake ; no tree or shrub
To rest the eye, on all the drear expanse !—
Gorse, bramblethorns, and heath alone grow sparse
On that wild scene of utter solitude !
The gale has dropped—a sudden calm succeeds.
Blacker it ever grows, as though the sun,
Deposed from his estate as King of Day,
Had left his throne, and grim usurping Night
Sat brooding mischief on his royal seat !
Big rain-drops fall, like tears of anguished Shame
Too glad to weep on Nature's awestruck breast.
At last the sougling of the wind is heard,
Driving before it scudding cataracts,
With hissing hailstones clattering as they fall—
With one loud shriek, as of unchained despair,
And long-pent agony, the storm breaks loose !
The thunders boom like cannon singly fired ;
There is no echo to repeat their peals—
And as the lightnings flash, they bounding leap
Right o'er the plain, to the horizon bleak,
When gorse and thorns and heath all fade away,
And earth and sky unblent yet seem to meet !

* The writer has often watched, with admiration, the patient industry of those sagacious little creatures. The number of journeys, to and from their homes, which they undertake in quest of straws and other dry material for their nests, is astonishing.

GIBRALTAR.



WHEN Hercules is heard to swear
That Calpe's* mount in twain he'll tear,
Great Jove himself the boast derides
With laughter fit to crack his sides !

Alcmené's son the rock surveyed,
Before to rend it he essayed—
Abyla's crag he took in hand
To fling across to Afric's strand !

One foot the panting hero placed
Against its sides—His arms embraced
Its giant girth—Then stooping o'er
His task, the mount in twain he tore !

Amazed, all heaven beheld him stand
Poising the fragment in his hand,
Till, like a child in wanton play,
He flung it hurtling, far away !

The feat was done, and Jove forbore
To scoff—Olympus laughed no more ;
For salt sea-waves triumphant rolled
O'er sands where granite tow'r'd of old !

Britannia, mistress of the seas,
Holds Calpe fast like Hercules,
But when she flings the "Rock" away
She's seen the zenith of her day !

* Calpe is the ancient name of the rock of Gibraltar. The mythical tradition tells that it was united to Abyla, until Hercules tore the mountain asunder, and admitted the waters of the Atlantic to mingle with the Mediterranean. Gibraltar was taken by the British under Sir George Rooke, from the Spaniards in 1704. The great siege in which Sir John Elliot so bravely distinguished himself, lasted from July 16, 1779, to February 5, 1783.—*Haydn's Dict. of Dates.*

Her ships no more shall fearless ride,
 The tyrant's dread, the freeman's pride ;
 Palsied the hand—and curst the day
 That give what Elliot saved away !
 Gibraltar ! Oh my country's boast,
 With cloud-capped head and surf-washed coast ;
 Thy flag shall wave, thy cannon roar,
 Till Britain's arm can strike no more !

THE PERFECT ROMAN GENTLEMAN TO HIS SLAVE.

A CLASSICAL MONOLOGUE.

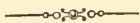


TELL thee, TITUS, thou art half a man,
 Although thy appetite outruns a beast's !
 Does any dog' object to mouldy crusts ?
 And as to "wholesome " drink—why ditch-water
 Sufficeth to assuage the thirst of hounds !
 What, caitiff !—Drunk again, by Jupiter—
 Maundering about the "dignity of man !"
 Call *thee* a man ! Great Jove avenge me now !
 I bought his carcase very, very dear.
 And now, the dog, the slave, the menial swine
 Quotes "Scripture"—Hark'ee ! in support of rights
 Which, if he ever had, I bought long since !

* * * * *

Come hither, TITUS ! Put me into bed—
 That Massic wine has rather fuddled me,
 Although my aching head is clear enough
 To know that slaves are far below the brutes—
 Their wives and daughters—Well—for vermin, they
 Are very charming creatures now and then !
 There, get me into bed, thou drunken beast !
 But, sot ! Dare breathe one single trait'rous word
 About the "BOOK " that says that "of one blood "
 GOD made all "things " that look like human kind,

I'll have thee tortured, racked, torn up by dogs,
 Put in the pond * to fatten up those carp
 Which thou, dog, know'st so whet my appetite !—
 Hast thou forgotten JUNO, called thy " wife,"
 The Christian convert ? Why ! She's in the lake—
 To-day I dined off her and splendid eels !
 Pull off my boots—TITUS, I feel so bad—
 Beast ! mind my corns ! There, run and fetch the leech,
 And bid him bring emetics.† Don't forget ;
 I've dined too freely, TITUS—and to-night
 I have a supper-party of choice friends,
 All noble Lords and Roman gentlemen—
 Run, TITUS ; fetch the medicine-man, or else,
 At supper-time I shall not eat one bit !
 When we have finished, thou may'st pick the scraps—
 TITUS, I am in pain ! Prithee, make haste !
 If I enjoy my supper, thou, methinks,
 Shalt gain thy freedom, or at least shalt taste
 The toothsome leavings on my golden plate !
 'Twill make thee proud, perchance ?—Remember then
 Thou art a slave—thy " betters," Gentlemen !



SPELLBOUND.



CRUSHING silence weighs upon the world !

My thoughts are languid, and each pulse is still ;

Dumbness has seized upon the very birds ;

Torpor and emptiness the landscape fill !

I have no power to muse—no strength to mourn—

No least ambition—no desire to die ;

No heart to live. All is a formless blank—

A listless void of aimless apathy !

* This allusion points to recorded facts.

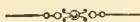
† In the degenerate days of Imperial luxury emetics were had recourse to, to stimulate fresh excesses in gluttony.

The rose is crimsonless, and cold the sun ;
 Tears have no bitterness, and pain no smart ;
 Death seems to reign, and yet it is not death,
 But tranceful nothingness that kills the heart !

Sleep-waking shadows feebly straggle by
 Impalpable, like phantom cobwebs spun
 By spider-ghosts, or filmy silkworm's threads,
 From dreamland nooks that never felt the sun !

I know I am—and yet I do not know ;
 All consciousness is numbed, I vaguely drift
 Now towards my real self, and then away ;
 Now all is fog, and then the vapours lift !

O dreadful torpor, joyless, griefless spell—
 Paralysis of hearing, touch, and sight !
 O mind becalmed upon a tideless sea,
 Awake ! arise, and look upon the light ! *



THE BELLS OF AMSTERDAM.



HE bells of Amsterdam are wonderful !
 E'en as I write, I hear their carillon
 Shedding o'er Northern Venice such a flood
 Of tunefulness as half redeems its damps !
 Yes, they are wonderful !—For all the clocks
 Not only warble beauteous tunes before
 They strike the solemn hours, but also toll
 The coming hours upon a different bell,
 When the long hand has half gone round the dial !
 Oh, how I have listened to those wondrous bells
 In my lone room, when everything was still,
 Except the winter's wind in my quaint stove,
 That roared and blustered, telling a brave tale
 Of how the ships were tossing out at sea !

* The above is no inapt shadowing-forth of the crushing depression produced by the Dutch ague, which is expressively called by the natives, "the Fever."

Yes ! all was silent in the streets, except
The bells, the watchman's doleful chaunt, the whirr,
His rattle's * rasping whirr, as he cried out
The time of morning.—Dear familiar sounds !

* * * *

The streets are quite forsaken—The canals
On this cold, cheerless January morn,
Flash with the lazy gleam of voiceless lamps,
And saunter on, in sluggish ripples, to
The grim lock-gates, by which their waters creep
In dogged gravity to the great sea !
Oh, stately bells !—Weird voices of the past—
All made to speak by mechanician's art ;
Tuned into melody by drowsy hands
Of men long gone to their eternal sleep,
Who never wearied at the same refrains—†
How different to the joyous, babbling tones
Of our sweet Sunday-chimes, or wedding-bells
Rung by the hands of music-loving men !
There is a life, a vigor in the peals,
The crashing harmonies we hear at home.
Oh, how they sweep and tinkle far away
Across the corn-fields, in the golden sun—
No Briton catches that delightful sound
But leaps for joy that he's an Englishman !
But hark !—The bells have chimed, the clock has struck
Once more the hour, in sleeping Amsterdam—
The watchman's rattle grates—He cries aloud,

* When the writer first undertook the Chaplaincy at Amsterdam, and until about eighteen months ago, the streets were guarded at night by watchmen instead of the city police. They were decrepit old fellows of the original "Charley" type. Their rattles were fixed to a long wooden handle, and very noisy. When suddenly sprung under the windows in the deserted streets, and in the stillness of the night, they had a very startling effect.

† The Dutch are probably the most Conservative nation of Europe in everything that appertains to public and domestic life. Sir William Temple, Bart., who was Ambassador at the Hague, in his volume "Observations upon the United Provinces of the Netherlands," gives a description of manners and customs in Holland, which, in many particulars, might have been written in the year of grace 1879. Sir William's book was published in London in 1673, and will repay a Dutchman's perusal.

With his queer howl pathetically droll,
 That it is two o'clock!—The dearest friend
 Of my lone exile, my loquacious pen
 That always bears me company at night,
 Shows symptoms sure of failing energy.
 Good-night! sweet bells of Amsterdam—Ring on!
 Ring ever on, and cheer the stranger in
 His solitary room, as you've cheered me!
 Pour forth your sweetness like the scent of flowers
 Over the city where so many friends
 In hospitable homes are slumbering now—
 The night is very dark! Alone I am,
 But for the kindly Bells of Amsterdam! *

AMSTERDAM, *January 25, 1877.*



THE WOLVES.



WHEN falling snowflakes dim December's skies,
 And blur the landscape from the traveller's
 sight;

When far and wide the prospect silent lies,
 And moon and stars refuse to give their light,
 How welcome is the bark of dog from far,
 And gleam of cottage-pane like guiding star!

* The author spent nearly three months alone, in what is by courtesy, called the "English Parsonage," before any member of his family could join him. The weather was very severe, and the stove in the vestry-room (the house is part and parcel of the church) in spite of vigorous stoking, refused to the last to give out any sufficient heat. The solitude was only broken by the doleful companionship of the lean, slatternly old sextoness, and her more than half-starved cat, both, since then, happily dispensed with at different times. The rats, however, amply avenged the worthy couple by invading the house in shoals. I have seen six at once, in a group, playing in the dismal kitchen. A cesspool in the hall, unpurified for years, shed anything but an invigorating aroma. In spite however of repeated and distressing attacks of ague, the author and his family contrived to pass some very happy hours in Amsterdam—The English Parsonage, however, stands empty to this day, though offered for the moderate rental of £25 per annum.

Voiceless the air and mute the pilgrim's tread ;
The cold night-blast congeals the curling breath ;
Trackless the moors—the world itself seems dead,
And wolves alone pursue their quest of death !
Hist !—From the league-spread woods of fragrant pine,
Is borne along the wolf-cub's boding whine !
They come—they come ! The demon-pack draws nigh !
Cruel as fate—greedy as yawning hell !
Flog up the team !—The panting horses fly
Straight to the glimmering lights they know so well ;
The homestead's gained !—The steeds are in their stall ;
And round the doors the baffled spoilers call !



PILE UP THE TURF.*



PILE up the turf ! The night is very bleak—
The winter's wind careers through wood and
wold ;

The fire is clear—The willing embers gleam
With frosty brightness—Yet my heart is cold !

Pile up the turf ! It gives a cheery smell—
Visions of absent ones across the main,
Within its smokeless glow, my exiled heart
Beholds, and prays to kiss them soon again !

Pile up the turf ! Pile up the beechwood logs—
And let them hiss and crackle in the stove !
The wind that roars within my chimney here,
Perhaps blows straight from the dear home I love !

Pile up the turf and logs ! The kindly heat
Attracts the blast, and bids it pause, and say
How it has travelled right across the seas,
From where my darlings slumber far away !

AMSTERDAM, *February 9, 1877.*

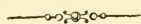
* Turf and wood are the staple fuel of the Low Countries. They are burnt in tiled or iron stoves. Open fireplaces, such as we have in England, are almost unknown.

BETRAYAL.



ORATIUS FLACCUS erst has aptly said,
 The man that once betrays the sacred trust
 Of hospitality, and Friendship's seal,
 Shall sit beneath my roof-tree never more !
 The fragile bark of holy Confidence
 Would drown us both, did he embark with me,
 In mutual quest upon life's stormy main—
 The wind and waves indignantly would rise,
 And drive the skiff upon avenging rocks,
 Or choke the traitor in the quicksands' ooze !—
 And yet your traitor's frank, or so he seems—
 Of bland address, and captivating smile ;
 A lover of the poor at little cost—
 A handy man who's never in the way ;
 Plays *cicerone*, takes you out for walks,
 Has great command of petty courtesies,
 Offers you money, brings the children sweets,
 Would have you to his chambers thrice a week ;
 Is boon companion, or would pass for one,
 Drinks thinnest claret—always is “all there !”
 But plies his guests with far more potent stuff,
 Gets confidential—urges you to talk—
 Keeps pressing on you “just a toothful more”—
 Praises your talents, cries up your renown ;
 Depreciates himself, and tells you how
 He raised himself from very humble stock—
 Has “no pretensions—For my mother, sir,
 Has always kept a little huckster's shop—”
 As if it mattered to the world one jot
 How the dam lives who whelped so base a cub !—
 And so the sycophant contrives to worm

First one thing, then another from his guests ;
Spite of his lowering brow, and gleaming teeth,
Spite of his blinking eye, and fawning mien—
Spite of his hangdog look when off his guard,
That would commend another to the rope ;
And when he's gained the knowledge that he sought,
He turns upon his dupes, with demon's hate,
And, as the python folds his horrid coils
Around the hapless deer at one fell spring,
And joys to feel it shrink, and hear its groans
Of stark despair and anguished helplessness,
He cracks their every bone, and glides away
To catch some other victim in his snares,
And writhes with laughter, as he tells the joke
To far more wicked and degraded friends.
Traitors by viler men are cat's-paws made,
And treachery in basest coin is paid ! *



THE PHANTOM CHASE.

FROM THE GERMAN OF MICHAEL BEREND.



HE dismal blast is moaning wild,
The misty air is sharp and cold.
It is the Phantom Chase, my child,
That nightly scours the wood and wold !
List to the hell-hound's ravening bark !
List how the screech-owl hoots again !
The huntsman winds his horn, and hark,
A cry of blood, of spoil, of pain !
The stag from ferny cover flies—
But flies in vain, for death is fleet—
One stifled sob ! Alas, he lies
At the grim hunter's ghostly feet !

* This fanciful combination of Uriah Heep, Mr. Litimer, and Mr. Carker, though in the present case imaginary, has its representatives in real life.

DEJECTION.

SOFT as the Summer wind with roses laden,
And woodbine's bloom, and starry jasmine's
breath,

The memories of the Past come sweetly sighing
Across the gulf that bounds the world of death !

Some fond things ne'er decay, and never perish—
Death has no power, and darkness has no gloom,
To quench their shining in Endearment's mirror—
In the soul's garden they for ever bloom !

But yet, ah me ! the soul itself has winters ;
Has sunless moments, days so darkly sad,
That it forgets the bygone, all dejected ;
And asks in anguish, " Was I ever glad ? "

But then once more the gracious wind comes singing
From Memory's groves, and Joy's enchanted plain—
The mists of grief, the clouds are rent asunder,
And the glad soul lives in the past again !

MODERN WITCHCRAFT.

ASKED to describe a witch of modern times,
We'll tell our tale with brief simplicity.
Fair reader, don't expect a high-peaked hat,
A spanking broomstick, or a scarlet cloak ;
A howling heath, or lonesome, naked rock,
With precipice, and gruesome chasm below !—
Our fancy type of modern sorceress,
Is not a mumbling crone devoid of teeth ;
She has a mouthful of such ivories !

White as a dog's, which her thin, twitching lips
 Are ever showing with a baleful smile.
 The teeth are real, it's the tongue that's false.
 A witch! Why, bless your simple hearts, she is
 Only a cross, pernicketty old maid!
 She uses glycerine to smooth her hands;
 Her cuffs and collars are of snowy white!
 Her kerchief's over-scented with vanille!
 She has no "evil eye," both are the same;
 Deep-sunken, restless, black as ebony,
 With a strange glamour of uncanny sheen!
 She's high cheek-bones just like a Japanese,
 And scanty locks like horsehair in a twist;
 Her features like a windfall apple bruised.
 Her dress clings tight—is scant to meagreness;
 Of decent black, with bow of Indian red,
 As counterfoil to the vermilion patch
 That lights each cheek with a scorched, feverish look.
 She has a dread of cats, for, people say,
 "Something" has scared her into fits ere now,
 By dancing round her as a sable Tom!
 As for her witchcraft, that is all "moonshine."
 She has the craft, but is no witch at all.
Lucus a non lucendo, she is called
 A "witch" by a perverse propriety.
 She's not bewitching, and she never was;
 She can't use charms for she has none to spare,
 Those on her chain are not available.
 Her palm is never crossed, her temper is.
 She does not spoil your beer, or turn your milk,
 The cook would turn her out if she should try;
 The only thing she spoils is peace of mind.
 She plays no pranks but of old-maidish spite:
 Her witchcraft does no harm, except to set
 The village where she lodges by the ears.
 As for her threats, they are ridiculous.
 Where she is known her whispers do no harm,

Her tongue's proverbial, which disarms its sting.
 Her real power lies in distorting facts,
 Or in the gusto with which women-folk,
 More wicked than herself, improve her tales ;
 A lie set rolling like a snowball grows.
 She's no enchantress, that one glance reveals.
 She's pitied, laughed at, quizzed, but seldom feared ;
 And though she is a prophetess of ill,
 Her baleful prophecies come seldom true,
 I think I've said enough, so that must do.



THE MARCH OF MAY.



H, Prince of months ! "Desired"* May !
 Why is thy pageantry so brief ?
 Why are thy lieges always doomed
 To pine for thee in wintry grief ?

Oh, May ! Oh, May ! we fain must wait ;
 We cannot speed thy rainbow flight ;
 We crave, we yearn for brighter days—
 How long shall yearning end in night ?—

May comes ! May rides in regal state,
 The rightful heir of all the year !
 In gala dress all things troop forth
 Their longed-for, chosen prince to cheer !

Behold the jovial, gallant boy
 Upon his palfrey ZEPHYR sit !
 Before him, herald butterflies
 In bravely painted tabbards † flit !

* A title of affection at first given to Louis XV. of France. Folks changed their opinion afterwards !

† The State costume of heralds is the tabbard.

Your carpets spread, ye spangled fields
Of velvet-pile and tapestry !
May, gracious prince, takes rare delight
In gallant show and bravery !

Wave ! wave ! ye woodland chieftains wave
Your broidered flags of priceless green !
Festooned with honeysuckle wreaths,
Let every forest tree be seen !

Wake harps !—Ye silver trumpets bray !
Roll, roll, ye festive kettle-drums !—
Wake, clarions ! wake the “ MARCH OF MAY,”
For he in princely triumph comes !

Ye crimson roses, pour your scents,
Like *hippocras* * from ruby bowls !
The world is drunk and wild with joy—
Hark, how its chorussed anthem rolls !

The prince's features beam with smiles,
He bows his thanks like CHARLES of old ;
Largesse † he scatters right and left,
Coined in his pure laburnum gold !

May's come at last !—'tis fond to wait
For joy at stated times, or mirth ;
GOD changes grief to full-blown bliss,
And MERCY waits on trouble's birth !

* A drink made of wine and spices, called “hippocras.”

† *Largesse*, a gratuity given chiefly on State occasions by people of high degree.

GRIEF'S LIVELY.



FOY has its symbols here below,
 Which bring the downcast soul relief;
 Her emblems too has sable woe,
 That speak unchangingly of grief!
 The yew-branch whispers of the tomb,
 Twine it with roses as you will;
 And, though enwreathed with myrtle-bloom,
 The cypress will be cypress still!
 The nightingale, that from the earth
 Might soar to heaven on music's wings,
 Can move to tears, but not to mirth,
 For 'tis a plaintive dirge he sings!
 The tinted leaves of forest fanned
 By autumn's soft and flattering breath,
 Are but a doomed, though gorgeous band,
 Decked out to tread the *Dance of Death*! *
 Death envies not their little day,
 He knows how soon they perish all;
 For 'tis the hand of false Decay
 That paints the woodlands in the fall!
 In vain the chilling winter vaunts
 Her stainless garb of bridal snow;
 It is a mourning robe she flaunts,
 To hide a world of death below!
 In vain she boasts her spotless wreath;
 Before the sun it melts in tears,
 And all the ruin hid beneath,
 In melancholy truth appears!
 Death ever struggles to disguise
 The symbol of mortality
 Stamped on his brow—but vainly tries—
 'Tis written there indelibly!

* Holbein's '*Dance of Death*.'

PRESUMPTION.



THE little cock that on the dunghill crowed,
Straining his neck, and flapping his proud
wings,

For joy that he the older cock had thrashed,
Had doubtless held his peace, had he foreseen
That when he cried so loud, the farmer's wife
Would call to smock-frocked Jock, the carter's lad,
"Just go and wring that noisy cockerel's neck—
"I had forgotten him, had he not crowed
"Just in the nick of time—I want one more
"To make my dozen up for the hotel.
"Go wring his neck, and pluck him very clean!"

Rely upon it, that unlucky bird
Looked very different when his neck was wrung,
And all his glossy feathers clean stripped off,
To the same cock that screamed his foe's defeat,
And bustled up and down, and to and fro
Amongst the hens, defiance in his eye,
His spurs yet reeking with his old friend's blood!

All have their masters—most men find their match,
And 'tis not things we fear that conquer us.
Athletes know fairly well how strong they are—
What they can do—and what they mayn't attempt.
A toe-nail torn, a scalded hand, a sprain
Undoes the champion for the coming "mill."
He is as strong as ever otherwise;
But this small blemish beats him from the field.
The bravest man on crutches cannot fight.
Let no one boast, or on his strength presume.
The braggart often finds, to his sore cost,
He takes too careless views of time and chance;

And like the cock, his noisy pride provokes
Him on to aggravate his own downfall.
All kind of boasting is a littleness
To which brave men are often too much given !
They are too careless—too in love with self,
To note that every word, however true,
Which tells their prowess, by a smaller world
Of mediocrity and envious spite,
A puny world of very littleness,
Is always treasured up, and kept in store,
Thought over, nursed, like pickled rods or whips
To scourge them with, if they perchance fall short !
Presumption is imprudence, for this earth
Is full of malice, envy, hatred, strife :
And though men more than doubt what boasters say,
They always fear “ it might be true, and we
“ Will take good care he shall not cut us out ! ”
And so they plot, lay snares and traps, dig pits ;
And when he trips his foot and comes to grief,
Through their own wicked, envious villany,
They raise a hellish shout, and tell abroad
The story of the strong man’s overthrow.
Oh, how the pit and children of the pit
Sing *Fubilate* when a man is down !

Severer critics will perhaps demur,
And say we’ve flogged on-lookers, not the vice.
But this is custom with the Esquimaux—
Team-drivers in those frozen latitudes
Where men must use the little wits they’ve left,
Always hit out with their dread seven-leagued whips
At some poor dog they know will howl aloud.
The lesson is not lost—The wiser dogs
Take the sharp hint which spares “ the cut direct,”
And drag the laggards over ruts and chasms,
O’er hill and hummock, over rotten ice,
Until the snow-hut glimmers through the fog :
We fain would hope we’ve whipped the proper dog !

SUCCESS.



ID-ocean's storms are harmless, when compared
With rocks and reefs which compass round the
port !

The narrow straits that lead to hopes fulfilled
Are often bound by shoals and hungry sands,
Whose envious maw is never satisfied ;
O'er them the cruel surf for ever breaks,
And howls aloud for joy when seamen drown !

How odd it is few know the safe way home !
A stranger hand must pilot the brave ship
Into the haven—Though with swelling sails
She dared the tossing of Atlantic waves !

'Tis not the voyage—'Tis the rock-bound coasts
Of priceless home, which the bold skipper dreads—
He sees the goal, but knows it is not won,
Until the anchor's cast—And his fond wife
Sits on his knee, scarce listening to his tales
Of foreign lands, for joy that he is safe !


So felt the youth who in Corinthian games
Contended manfully—All diffident
He fought the fight—He ran the breathless race,
Nor dared to hope for conquest, till his ears,
Amazed and doubting, heard his own small name
Pass with electric thrill, like lightning flash,
All down the throng—the “cloud of witnesses—”
The surging mob too glad to shout “hurrah !”
Then first the panting, faint competitor
Knew he was victor, and the crown was won !

Alas ! to think that glorious wreath was made
Of leaves—like earth's best guerdon born to fade.

MRS. ALDERMAN DAVID HENRY STONE.

LADY MAYORESS OF LONDON, 1874-75.*

In Memoriam.


 HE mellow night of August is not dark—
The quiet fields are glad with rustling gold—
Orchards and vineyards promise store of fruit,
And queenly moonlight floods the wood and wold !

Not till November's deathlike lonesomeness,
When East-winds blow, and fields are white with frost,
The world bereaved but long time hoping on,
In desolation knows how much it's lost !

Sleep, gentle lady ! rich in kindness—
Rich in good works—thou hast not lived in vain !
Like August's sunshine, bountiful though brief,
Stored up in grateful hearts thy fruits remain !

TO THE MARQUIS OF SALISBURY.

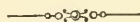
ON HIS DEPARTURE FOR CONSTANTINOPLE.

 OME men there are whose lives are History,
With all the feelings common to our race ;
With acres broad, and wealth almost untold ;
With love of home, of children's winsome ways,
With keen enjoyment of life's lighter toils,
Of pleasures of the chase and sylvan scenes.

* The writer trusts that these lines may be accepted as a very sincere, though very inadequate expression of the grateful remembrance which he cherishes of the many graceful kindnesses shown, not only to himself and his wife, but also to his children, by Mrs. Stone in the year that he had the privilege of performing the office of Chaplain, during her husband's splendid Mayoralty.

There are such men whose lives are History :
They toil not for their own but others' good.
On such, a wise discriminating fate
Takes early hold, and drives from common cares,
To serve their country and their fellow-men !
To them the dalliance soft of wedded joys,
The ecstasy of toying with their babes,
Of training up their offspring with fond care,
Are all denied. The weighty helm of rule
Is thrust into their hands, and millions trust
Their present weal, their whole prosperity,
To men like these to guide the ship of State !
Oh, happy England ! that her nobles deem
The public service ample recompense.
For hardships which mere common folks would shun !
Let foreign millionaires their riches boast,
And pay their governments at second hand,
Whilst riot and disgraceful license stir
The unfed crowd to vengeance and revolt !
England's proud notables are foremost aye
To labour for her good.—The populace
Will never grudge the well earned-coronet.
The best-born of her sons are ever first
To serve her bravely when the times are worst !

November 1876.



READY, AYE READY!

DEDICATED TO THE CITIZENS OF LONDON.



HERE lives here yet the love of human kind !
England is not so sunk in "stocks and shares,"
In petty gains, or wealth-amassing schemes,
But that her mighty heart beats tremblingly
At the recital of all brethren's woes !
The world is large—but England's sisterhood,
Her kindly love embraces every land ;

Let but the wire discourse with flashing tongue,
In accents curt, with haste too brief for sighs,
Of famine, flood, or kindred miseries
Which GOD, to us immeasurably kind,
All-wise permits to ravage other lands,
England at once puts forth her sympathy !
Let but the cause be good, the object just,
Her gentle soul, all sisterly, is touched
With kindest pity for the desolate.
No widows weep in vain, nor orphans cry !
The treasures of boundless wealth unbarred
Pour comfort on the children of despair ;
And like heaven's rain, where all was barrenness,
The kindly weepings of her charity
Revive the death-doomed, bid the dying live !
But woe to those who, with ambition drunk,
" A nation of shopkeepers " dare to flout !
England was first to manumit the slave,
She earned the gold that set the negro free ;
She yet has well-earned stores which she will spend,
Nay, pour like water forth, if need demands !
The men of London know their history—
There freedom lives—the fires of liberty
On Christian altars yet perpetual burn !
Let but the trumpet's sound call Englishmen
As erst their sires, to stand alone in arms
" For GOD and Queen," and Europe's liberties,
The mighty power of London's companies ;
The untold wealth of London's citizens ;
The joyful aid of prelate, peer, and squire ;
The manhood stern of nonconformity ;
The priceless, unbought aid of artisans ;
The sturdy hands of toil-stained rustic men :
All these will testify to autocrats
That England lives—is strong, and has the will,
With GOD's good help, " to do her duty " still !

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE WHITESIDE.

In Memoriam.



T last the high, commanding form lies low !
 The mighty heart is still—the tongue is dumb,
 And WHITESIDE'S clarion voice shall speak no more !
 Silent the lips that senates once could thrill—
 That could with scathing jest annihilate,
 Or with majestic floods of fiery words
 Delight, confound, and stir the hearts of men,
 As the strong wind upheaves the listening seas,
 And bids them clap their hands in wild delight
 To listen to a voice as grand as theirs !
 Weep, Erin, weep ! WHITESIDE, almost the last,
 The stateliest of that long, that glorious line
 Of orators who swayed the mighty past,
 Is here no more !—Then write his worthy name
 Upon the scroll, where others pass'd away,
 Both friends and foes, for ever live in fame !
 Oh ! kindly tomb, where each competitor
 Forgets the strifes of earth, and peaceful sleeps ;
 Whilst GLORY o'er his dust fond vigils keeps !

AMSTERDAM, *December 5, 1876.*

H—— T——, BANKER, OF LOMBARD STREET.

DIED JANUARY 2, 1877, AGED 61.

In Memoriam.



ENTLE, and rich like JOSEPH, whose new tomb
 Contained three days the body of our LORD,
 The true disciple has gone home to Him
 Who bought us with His blood, and taught his friends

To love each other e'en as He loved them !
 No narrow bigot was that Christian man ;
 His charities were great, but silent as
 The sun's glad heat which blesses everything.
 Too soon, alas, for those he loved to cheer
 With his beneficence, he's fall'n asleep !
 Yet, like the spices in that sepulchre
 Where angels sat, and told the glorious news
 That Christ is ris'n indeed, he leaves behind
 A grateful odour of accepted works,
 Done modestly in honour of his LORD !



WILLIAM WYNNE WILLSON, CHRISTIAN
 PHILANTHROPIST.

DIED IN A RIPE OLD AGE. JANUARY 10, 1877.

In Memoriam.



AT last ! The gallant veteran is gone
 Where sword and shield are but as trophies hung
 Of triumphs gained—in that grand Temple where
 No sound is heard of war, but ceaseless shouts,
 “ Thanks be to GOD, who's given the victory ! ”
 Our brother laid to rest not only prayed,
 But laboured daily to promote the peace
 Of earth's Jerusalem ; and now he walks
 In that more radiant city SALEM, where
 His guides are rescued souls in garments white,
 Whom in this life he helped to bring to God !
 Sleep on then, Brother—thy appointed time ;
 And “ after many days ” thou shalt arise—
 At the Last Trumpet's sound, and stand within
 Thy lot of glory—when the SAVIOUR says
 To GOD's great FATHERHOOD—“ Time is no more—
 “ Redemption is complete. Behold the sons
 “ Which THOU hast giv'n me. Take them every one !
 “ Of those THOU gavest me I have lost none ! ”

W. B., BURIED AT SLOTERDYK,

JANUARY 18, 1877. AGED 6 YEARS.

In Memoriam.

—❖—

THE violet was plucked, ah me, too soon !”
So wept the gardener who had watched the bud
Mature its matchless, fragrant loveliness,
Amidst the frosts and rains of the New-year !
“ Yes, it is winter !—Cruel freak to pick
“ The one sweet violet I’ve nursed so long,
“ They might have left me that dear winter’s pet !”
So mourned the gardener ; but he had not mourned,
Had he but seen how gently that sweet flower—
Ah, yes !—how lovingly by angel hands
The violet was plucked, and laid upon
The altar of frankincense, by the throne
Of Him who bids the children come to Him !
Nay, weep not, sorrowing friends ! Your pretty flower
Is gone to Heaven. It lives in deathless bloom.
The Saviour wears it on His mighty heart
And beckons us to come where none can part !

—❖—

IN REMEMBRANCE OF A YOUNG ENGLISHMAN

DROWNED AT AMSTERDAM, JULY 19, 1878.

In Memoriam.

—❖—

WATCHED a leaflet on the wind-swept lake,
And saw it drift, like bark without a helm—
At last it found a quiet resting-place,
Far from its brethren-leaves beneath the elm !

The wilderness is full of lost ones’ graves—
Each distant clime some sainted dust contains !

The wild men note, in uncouth wonderment,
 The cross that tells the tale in modest strains !
 But yet the world is not so wide as once,
 For travel makes all human kind akin ;
 And places, nameless since the world began,
 Immortal names from buried heroes win !
 Death is not dumb—'tis eloquent of speech,
 And gives renown to each lone resting-place !
 Round the chill swamp, where dear ones sleeping lie,
 Love's halo shines, and fondness gives it grace !
 Weep not too sore the gallant sailor lad
 By Amstel's * river laid in lonesome peace !
 God's acre welcomes all—none strangers there—
 And in the grave the feuds of nations cease !
 Drowned in the deep and swiftly-flowing Y,
 In Holland, far away his ashes wait—
 The river caught him in its mighty arms,
 And bore him swiftly to the Golden Gate !



MRS. HAVERGAL.

In Memoriam.

SOFTLY she passed to her rest,†
 Wearied with life and its pain ;
 Gently she faded from earth,
 Never to suffer again.
 Spirit unselfish and pure !
 Intellect sprightly and clear—
 Blessing in silence like dew—
 Loving like sunshine to cheer !

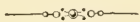
* The city of Amsterdam is built upon the rivers Amstel and Y. From the former river it takes its name. The Y (pronounced eye) unites the Zuyder and North Seas.

† This admirable gentlewoman was stepmother to the late Miss Frances Ridley Havergal.

Face full of archness and wit—
Glance ever lustrous but kind—
Lips full of wisdom and grace,
Dauntless, yet feminine mind !

Alas ! like the rainbow that paints
With its own matchless colours the sky,
She's vanished, and left us to mourn
The days she was with us gone by !

But yet as the evening star sets,
As with shining on earth it were tired,
She shall rise in fresh beauty again,
When the King "in His saints is admired!"



CAREL ADRIAAN CONSTANS LIBOSAN.

Assistant at the Laboratory of the University of Amsterdam ; died September 23, 1878, aged 22 years and nine months, in the dawning commencement of deserved fame.

In Memoriam.



GOLDEN cloud rose in the crimson West,
Amidst a cluster of superb compeers ;
It did not quench their brightness, but enhanced
Their kindly shining in this vale of tears ;
On angel wings the cloudlet seemed to fly,
And darkness mounted to the evening sky !

Athwart the gloaming of the starlit night,
A meteor grandly rose, and slowly crossed ;
It cast a train of glory far and wide ;
But like the cloud, ah me ! it soon was lost !—
Thus friendships fade, and those we love depart
To leave a solemn silence in the heart ! *

* The writer, with considerable diffidence, ventures here to insert an address which was presented to him on his leaving Amsterdam. He is emboldened to do so, because of its deserved tribute to his wife's dauntless perseverance, under difficulties which would speedily have discouraged many other ladies, and because

JOSEPH TILEY, ESQ., MUS. DOC. OXON.

FOR FIFTEEN YEARS ORGANIST AT ST. MICHAEL BASSISHAW.

In Memoriam.



HE minstrel's gone!—His music-loving soul,
 In his last slumber, caught the clarion call
 Of trumpeters above the Golden Gate!
 The light of heav'n flashed in his dying eye;
 And, with alacrity and joyful haste,
 He passed away to that far distant land
 Above the sunny skies, where Music reigns
 In gracious sweetness o'er the seraph's choirs!
 And now his spirit walks in wonderment
 Upon the "sea of glass mingled with fire,"
 Whose waters flash and scintillate beneath
 The kindling tread of harpers crowned with gold,
 And join exulting in the chorused praise
 That peals majestic round the throne of God—
 Sleep, gentle dust! Sleep till the Lord shall come,
 With Sinai's trumpet and the angels' shout;
 To fetch His saints, and wake the sleeping dead!

July 1879.

her self-sacrificing efforts were crowned with entire success. He also rejoices in the opportunity thus afforded of expressing his lasting obligations to Thomas Swindells, Esq., and Mrs. Swindells; to F. J. Tresling, Esq. and his admirable sister, Miss K. Tresling; to L. C. Schwab, Esq., Assistant at the State Laboratory at Amsterdam; to J. P. Janse, Esq., Lecturer at *Linneus*; and lastly to his ever-to-be-remembered friend and next-door neighbour, Libosan, whose upright sweetness of character and extraordinary abilities made it a delight and a privilege to hold converse with him:—

"DEAR FRIEND,

"We cannot permit you to leave Amsterdam without an earnest expression of our sympathy and love. With this object, a few members of your congregation at Amsterdam have united in presenting you with a slight offering, which, however trifling in itself, represents much good feeling towards yourself. We have enjoyed, during two years, the great privilege of hearing the Gospel, in its simple and

MEMORY.



H, Memory! Thou quenchless taper light
 That shed'st weird glamour o'er the seething waves
 Of past events, as when the fickle moon
 Or sleepless stars flash out on midnight seas,
 And show the mariner what way his ship
 Has groped its course through rocks and pitchy gloom!
 Oh Memory! Thrice doubtful boon to men—
 Why is it that thy cold, capricious flame
 Will kindle up the bygone scenes of grief—
 Will shine into the darkened corridors—
 The long-closed chambers of the silent heart?
 Let me but woo thee to light up past joys,
 No eager prayers will stir thy drowsy spark—
 Like smoking flax it smoulders—will not flame!

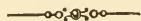
comforting truth, proclaimed from your lips, and not only are we thankful that the Episcopal Church here has again been opened for divine service, but all who have visited you must feel that your heart and home have also been ever open with a generous hospitality to all comers. During each summer, how many English travellers have not only heard God's Holy Word, but received a hearty welcome, and been permitted to rest for a moment, during their sojourn in a foreign land, in the sympathetic house of an English family; and to carry away with them happy memories of friendly kindness shown them for Christ's sake. Some pilgrims to 'the better land,' among whom you will especially recall our poor Friend LIBOSAN, have passed away, soothed by your ministrations, to rest in Jesus. We cannot allude to the brightness, and heartiness of our Sunday services, without asking your permission to offer our especial thanks to Mrs. McCaul, for her energy, and the untiring zeal with which she has organised and conducted the choir, prepared the elegant Christmas decorations, and in every way endeavoured to make the services, bright, attractive, and inviting. In asking your acceptance of a purse containing so trifling a sum, we would assure you, that it is accompanied by our earnest prayers and wishes for the welfare and prosperity of yourself and family, wherever it may please God to call you; and we say to you, with earnest hearts and true, 'God speed!'

"AMSTERDAM, February, 1879.
 "To the REV. CANON McCaul."

(Here follow the signatures.)


I cannot see the faces that I love—
 I can't discern forms once as dear as life.
 They flit before me all impalpable—
 Pale shadows from the graves of dead delights !

Oh, cruel Memory, wake ! Thy taper trim—
 My grieving heart would fain revisit scenes
 Of long lost joys and guileless happiness—
 My soul puts out her hand to grasp thy lamp—
 Oh ! mock me not, nor bid me grope in vain,
 In search of comfort through the realms of pain !



EN V Y.



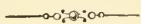
 HERE are some men so eaten up with spleen,
 So anxious for applause and flattery,
 That praise of others is a slight to them !

Commend a calf, and say it has good points,
 These jealous fools are all on fire at once,
 And think the calf has robbed them of their dues—
 Perhaps he has—for he's "the better man ;"
 He envies not, but grateful chews his hay.
 But those quaint people are so sensitive—
 They think the world is "making fun" of them !
 Good Providence ! How men deceive themselves.
 On water-gruel none waxed "jolly" yet—
 And protoplasm is not a theme for mirth !

Oh, how they hate that calf !—In one degree
 Alone less fiercely than its eulogist—
 We said, they think that folks poke fun at them !
 That means, that people "enviously decry"
 Their splendid talents, and *distingué* mien ;
 Whilst the "Old clo'" men, crying down the street,
 Grin as they pass—but never ask to deal !

And yet such folk will bear the smarting jest,
The cruel gibe that, like rat's poisoned tooth,
Gnaws slowly through the vitals of the soul
Of men more sensitive to real wrongs!

Your praise-sick glutton is too great a dolt—
He hugs himself too much—is too far gone
In self-esteem, to fancy men could jest,
Could find a joke to crack on his dull hide—
They smile indeed, he knows, but, "at his worth!"
And so, dissolved in tears of mirth, the world
Laughs till it weeps, at such conceited fools
Who strut and gibber, fish for compliments,
Nay, gobble down the scum of nauseous praise
Thrown broadcast at the mob by public men—
Swine eat strange things. He is the dirtiest swine
Who dines himself, but won't let others dine!



BACKBITING.



THOSE nimble creatures that can bite and hop,
And which evade infuriated grabs;
Which worry kings and queens, as well as dogs,
Although, like dogs, kings may not scratch themselves—
Noblesse oblige! And so these insect foes
Torment great folks who may not show distress!
What king or queen their Lord High Chancellor
Ever commanded thus? "Sir, catch that flea!
"Bring in a bill, and make them felons all!"

Those nimble creatures—there's where we left off—
They have impunity of littleness.
And yet small worries goad the greatest souls,
Because they cannot scotch them, as they would
Real big troubles, with one mighty stroke;
And so these creatures tease and aggravate,

Until the lion roars and lashes up
His palpitating carcass with his tail !
Such little worries make him quite forget
That he is king of beasts, and should not yelp !
This is the secret which makes human "things"
Too small, too petty for a real blow,
To feel impunity, and wreak their spite
Upon the men whose goodness makes them mad.

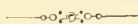
They are so different to their craven selves.
They are "so reticent," and never tell
An evil tale. Because the tale may do
Some harm, some cruel wrong to those who kneel
At the same altar at "Communion time"—
Sneaks love iniquity, and not the truth,
And so they loathe, with all their currish hate,
The man who always makes them feel abashed
By the bright contrast of his words and deeds.
He is a puzzle. He's no "*business man*,"
He never sees what Mrs. Jenkins wears !

But to resume—Your backbiters are "smart"—
Are talkative. But sometimes make mistakes—
They've always got on hand a dirty tale—
A wretched tale of gossip, only fit
For kitchen-maids—and yet not fit for them,
Because, though lowly in estate, those girls
Have often honest, upright, kindly hearts—

We'll not be personal. Say, Robinson—
Jabez, or Jim perchance, his Christian name—
Without the great Accuser's devilish wit,
Unfolds his tale—or rather blurts it forth
To the wrong person—thinking that he, too,
Must feel delight in garbage fit for swine !
The backbiter pours forth his wretched tale—
His entertainer fidgets in his chair—
Then shakes his head, looks sad, and kindly says,
"We have no right to use our neighbours' names

“About such things, supposing they were true—
 “But you have just assured me, you can’t vouch
 “For what you say. Then why repeat the tale?
 “So devils whisper. Slander gets about,
 “Whilst the backbiter thinks that he is safe,
 “Because he ‘*cannot guarantee*’ what he’s been told.
 “No, my Good Friend. Let’s talk of other things—
 “Satan each night accuses you and me
 “Of many things which God won’t listen to!”

The hall bell rings! The very man walks in,
 Of whom the Backbiter has told the tale—
 He changes colour—but gets up and says,
 “My Dearest Friend! How do? I am so glad
 “To meet you thus. Your name was on my lips,
 “Just as it should be, when you rang the bell!”
 And then he shakes his hand till the bones ache.
 But this is mere bravado. For he looks
 With bully’s threatening at his honest host.
 “You dare to tell him! Yes, you sneak, you dare!
 “Just tell him what I said—I know you will!”
 And then he takes a cordial leave of both,
 Convinced that he’s “betrayed,” and hatches up,
 “Just to protect himself”! some filthy tale
 Against his host who could not tattle brook.
 But we have said enough. You know the man—
 Beware of dogs!—and—slander—if you can!



OUTWARD-BOUND.



ROLLING sea—a rattling gale!
 A regular “Nor’-wester.”
 To-day our ship sailed out of port,
 Now is the time to test her!
 She bounds, she leaps, she skips, she dives—

She pants, she creaks, she shivers ;
Whilst mountain-waves crash o'er her decks
And bows, in hissing rivers !

Her engines puff, and pound, and snort ;
They groan, they shriek—they rattle ;
But yet the ship careers along,
Like war-horse to the battle !
Away ! away ! On, ever on,
The mighty craft goes tearing,
Like giant trampling on his foes,
Defiant, baffled, swearing !

She beats them down—She leaps their crests—
She charges headlong o'er them ;
Or cleaves a passage through their ranks
Too mad to look before them !
Oh, ship ! brave ship ! fight proudly on ;
Defy the waves, subdue them ;
Pour forth your volumed smoke and sparks,
And battle grandly through them !

A gallant sight it is, at night,
Upon the stormy ocean,
To watch the sparks, and see the waves
In impotent commotion—
To mark the ship's unflinching course
Amidst the storm uproarious ;
And see her fight the blustering gale,
And reach the port victorious !—

HOMEWARD-BOUND.



THE midday sun is high o'er Albion's heights,
The rolling tide comes proudly flooding in,
Clapping its hands, and shouting to the cliffs,
As, in their giant arms the billows bear
A multitude of ships with outstretched sails,
And thunderous paddle-wheels, right into port.
Oh, what a scene of eager stirring life
Of seamen hailing and of pilots' cries !
List to the rattle of the ponderous chains,
As with a crash the anchor is let go !—
What volumed coils of black, far-reaching smoke—
How gay the streamers—and how bright the flags ;
As though a flight of tulip-painted birds
Had perched upon each yard and tapering mast !
See the dense crowds of friends upon the shore,
As each frail skiff puts off from every ship,
Freighted with men from every clime and land,
Eager to know what dear ones yet survive,
After long absence from beloved homes,
And weary wanderings over floods and fields,
In search of treasure, health, or martial fame !
How glad the sight of England's happy shores,
Its well-known steeples, and its village spires
Nestling amongst the trees, and far-off hills
All bright with cornfields and heath-covered moors ;
Or yet, more glad to those from sun-scorched lands,
Vivid with green, and flecked with snowy flocks !—
But day soon closes in, and twilight comes.
The August moon rides high above the bay ;
The crowds are gone—and many coloured lamps
Flash from the shipping, o'er the slumbering sea—
The tides are out—The breeze has died away.

No sound is heard except the dip of oars,
 Or seamen's song, or the sweet tuneful chimes
 That tell the hours, and thrill the traveller's heart
 With the dear thought that he is safe at home !

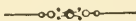


THE FOUR TRAVELLERS.



FOUR gentlemen, in good old coaching days,
 Alighted at the 'Crown and Sceptre' Inn,
 And ordered supper of the choicest things
 In season then, with wines and all to match.
 A jovial set these new arrivals were,
 In their snug, cosy, private sitting-room !
 They played their rubber, drank their bowl of punch ;
 Then rang for John, and bade him bring the lights—
 The waiter came, with many scrapes and bows.
 It was past one, and he had been asleep.
 As soon as he came in, one gentleman
 Called out, "Ah, John ! just kneel down, and unscrew
 "My wooden leg—There—Put it by that chair !"
 When that was done the second gentleman
 Cried also, "John ! Pray, be so very good,
 "And take out my left eye—It's made of glass."
 John did it ; when the third the waiter called,
 "Step here, my man, and take out my false teeth !"
 Poor John was sore perplexed, and yet obeyed.
 But then the fourth, most burly gentleman,
 Began to wag his head as if 'twere loose,
 And in a stern, determined voice bawled out,
 "Here, John, you villain ! Come, undo my head—
 "Lay it face upward, very carefully,
 "In cold spring water, close to my bedside."
 This was too much for John, obliging soul !
 He gave a shriek, and bounded to the door,
 And tore downstairs at three unheard of jumps !

Next morning, when the travellers rang the bell
At breakfast-time, mine host himself appeared,
Looking most ghastly pale, but yet polite,
And stammered, "Gentlemen!—There is your bill—
"I have receipted it, but take no pay.
"I've ordered round a chaise—Your things are in.
"It is beyond our skill to take off heads—
"John might be hanged for murder if he tried.
"Pray get your breakfast at some other house!"



TO THE SWALLOW'S DEPARTURE.



SPREAD thy wings, Swallow! Speed on thy
flight!

Haste thee from regions of fog and of night!
Insect-swarms dance no more o'er the chill plains!
Winter's at hand, with its frosts and its rains!

Speed thy flight, Swallow!—Hie thee to where
Constant the sunshine, and balmy the air—
Leave Northern tempest, and snowstorm to me—
Get thee to Africa—Cross the broad sea!

Spread thy wings, Swallow!—Get thee away—
Flit to the Cataracts—Dare not delay!
Soft Egypt woos thee—land of the sun—
Dare not to linger—Winter's begun!

And yet, oh, Swallows, when ye depart
Leaving behind you a grief in my heart,
Do not forget, that in evenings of May,
Insects are dancing—Hawthorn is gay!

Come back, then, Swallows, heralds of Spring,
Swift as the sunbeams—lithsome of wing—
Pilgrims from countries so sunlit and fair—
Tell me! Then tell me, if Sorrow dwells there!

THE NIGHT-WIND IN AMSTERDAM.



AFTER long days of never-ceasing storms,
To-night was silent as the tongueless tomb ;
Although the tomb is eloquent of speech !
Strong blasts had blown, and tempests raved at sea
Against the patient cliffs—so kindly sad
To see their shelter made the ship-boy's grave.
But, hark ! Again the savage storm-fiends scream
In triumph, yelling triumph merciless ;
With ruin jubilant, and shipwreck glad,
Gloating and fever-charged from Holland's swamps
And ague-fields, foul, stinking, reeking flats,
Like the morasses and the Stygian sloughs
That lead from blank Despair to Hell itself !
Yes !—Hark ! again the savage storm-wind roars
In sleety fury ; raging, pitiless !—
Oh, how it shrieks through the deserted streets
Of snoring, unimpassioned Amsterdam !
On, on it comes—the raving Winter-wind,
Tearing along the shiv'ring, dank canals,
Scudding beneath each squat-built, hideous bridge,
Shaking each door, and rattling window-frames !
Meanwhile the sore-tormented, leafless trees,
Planted along the dark, forsaken quays,
With deprecating sobs, fling out their arms,
And rock and tremble, pictures of despair,
Entreating pity from the ruthless blast
That fain would throttle every living thing
That stands between it and its mad career,
Of curst miasma and malignant spite !

PEACE AND WAR.

"Peace yet inhabits these fair heights and plains,
"And lo ! we come, with War's dread implements,
"To change this Eden to a wilderness !"—*Transl. from Schiller.*



PEACE yet unexiled from her flowery cot
Smiled a soft welcome to the sons of war.
Poor maid ! unconscious of her cruel lot
She heard us passing by her trellised door,
And calling Innocence, with girlish glee
The sisters hand in hand came forth to see !
It was in truth a sight to look upon.
Battalions marched—curveting chargers neighed—
Brave music clashed—the guns drove rumbling on—
Bright scabbards clanked, and plumes and pennons
swayed !
The simple maidens never yet had heard
More stirring music than of singing-bird !
Our hosts that night were fighting far away,
Those gardens trampled down, and overrun ;
That sunny cot in ashes smoking lay,
And Peace and Innocence were all undone.
Thus Warfare proves a false and heartless guest,
Takes all it needs, and ruins all the rest !

STORM DEFERRED.



WAS just mid-day—the Summer noon was ripe—
A livid pallor stole across the heavens,
And blanched the lusty cheeks of hot July !
The air turned icy cold, the light grew dull—
Once, twice the sky grew ominously black ;

Darkness that might be felt oppressed the sense ;
The birds were dumb, or told their boding fears
In timid, whispering chirps ; or went to roost.
The brook grew still. The ripples danced no more.
The minnows ceased to leap, the trout dived low,
Or slowly rose with sluggish, circling rings.
The savage pike lay blinking in the reeds.
The patient angler could not see his float—*
And then was heard the coming hurricane,
In the tree-tops, with noise of crashing boughs !—
High overhead the tempest hurtled past,
As though a host of hooting fiends rushed by ;
Their war-cry havoc, and their errand death.
And yet no rain !—As though the very clouds
Were too awe-struck to shed one pleading tear,
Or deprecate the lightning's rending flash
Which did not strike, though distant thunders pealed—
And then the clouds rolled back, the vapours fled,
Or sullenly withdraw before the sun ;
The thrush and blackbird sang their songs again,
A sighing breath stole out amongst the flowers,
As of relief, and fragrant gratitude ;
And for a time 'twas summer-tide again !—
Such the last interval which Justice gives,
Before she smites, whilst grieving mercy weeps
The scalding tears of interceding love,
Though ribald mockery refuse to turn
And revelry afresh the wine-cup crowns !—
Thus closed the day, and the vainglorious West
Put on her robes of rich voluptuous sheen,
Of flaunting carmine, violet and gold,
And rosy cloudlets fluttered here and there,

* This piece was suggested by the extraordinary darkness that thrice prevailed between mid-day and half-past one o'clock, a few miles north of London, on Wednesday, July 16, of the present year (1879). All the appearances of a terrific storm impending presented themselves, but without any tempest following. The writer could literally not see the float with which he was angling. A friend observed a bird at roost, with his head under his wing, in his garden at Holloway, at about three o'clock P.M. on the same day.

Pages of honour to the regal sun,
Upon his progress to his ocean bed—
Fit prelude to a night of gruesome storm!—
For as the sun went down, a ghastly wail
Cried through the cordage of the rocking ships,
And whistling passed o'er the white-crested waves
Far out to sea, and visited each reef,
Each sunken rock, whose breakers never sleep,
And summoned every spirit of misrule
To gird himself for hurly-burly strife—
Unloosed the winds, unbound the water-floods,
Scared the wild sea-mews roosting on the cliffs,
Stirred every element to wild revolt,
And strewed the crashing beach with countless wrecks!

THE FIRST SNOWDROP.

DALE, patient flower, that droops its gentle eye,
In meek entreaty to the ruthless winds
Of February's loud and gusty month,
That finds its joy in lashing up the waves;
The eager, hungry waves to swallow up
The hapless ships, or crush them on the rocks!

All hail! dear snowdrop, first to break the chains,
The dreadful bondage of the ruffian Frost—
We greet thee, pallid envoy of good cheer,
Escaped from death, to tell all Nature how
The locks and bars, the rusty bolts are worn,
Of Winter's jails, where he had hoped to kill
All his sad captives by slow, pining death!

All hail, sweet flower! We welcome thy frail bell
That chimes in timid whispers the glad news,
How all the tyrant's spite, how all his hate
Has not sufficed to slay his prisoners yet,

Who in long-suffering silence wait to hear
 Glad April's breezes clamouring at the doors,
 And bringing freedom, and long-hoped release
 To all the beauteous brotherhood of flowers !



DEAD LOVES.

A FRAGMENT.



H, Love ! Oh, love !—How cruel to tie down
 A soul bereaved to an Eternal blank !
 And yet, in time, the captive loves his chain,
 And kisses oft the iron staple which
 Binds him to griefs which once were golden joys !
 He hugs his heavy gyves, and joys to think,
 In his poor prison-holidays—How few !—
 When his sad heart, by chance, by seldom chance,
 Forgets to grieve—forgets its life-long pain,
 And basks in sunlight of remembered days—
 —What do I think ? I think !—I think of this—
 How free I was to love !—How each dear bird,
 Thrush, linnet, blackbird, soaring lark, all sang,
 And e'en the darling robin, Winter's pet,
 Sang but one song—" I LOVE AND AM BELOVED ! "

* * * * *

Winter remains, but all the birds are gone !
 No redbreast pipes outside my prison bars
 Its cheery ditty to the frost-bound fields !
 The world itself seems tranced, and SILENCE goes
 It's voiceless rounds outside the rusty grate—
 Deaf sentinel betwixt the past and me—
 But they are dead !—Dead loves return no more !
 Hast thou forgotten, oh, my soul, thy chain,
 That binds thy halting foot to loves long dead ?
 Why not ? Why not !—The Roman martyr, linked
 To the poor clay of what was once his friend,

At times forgot, in beatific dreams,
 That he was chained to death, and doomed to die !
 Yet come, kind Death, and lay my loves and me
 Within the catacombs, when life's long pain
 Can smart no more and never throb again !



AMBITION.



LIFE is a trance, a nightmare of unrest,
 A very sea of pathless enterprize,
 To the ambitious, egotistic soul.
 Ambition ! That means lawful honest zeal
 To take high place amongst the kings of men—
 To wield the sceptre of a throne well won.
 But there are men who never can be taught
 That Nature formed them in a rarer mould ;
 That greatness is their birthright, if they knew
 How to make use of Heaven's supremest gifts—
 Men envy *them*, whilst they, with grudging, eye
 The abject dogs that starve about the streets.
 Folks fling a bone to those forsaken curs,
 And straightway Genius thinks itself o'erlooked !
 So prates the fool whose coffers are surcharged
 With diamonds, rubies, and all kinds of gems.
 "He's doomed to starve because stones are not gold !"
 "Bite and devour," is his philosophy ;
 "Grin like a dog and never have enough."
 And yet, some men there are most truly great,
 Could they but know what mighty gifts are theirs,
 And leave off hating other smaller men
 On whom such sunshine comes as may suffice
 To raise their thrifty crop of cress or beans.
 They will go grumbling on, and grudging sore—
 Is it because the windows of the mind

Are never opened to let in the air,
 The soothing air of thankfulness to God ?—
 So they go on, but never have enough
 Of worldly homage, or congenial fame,
 Till Death steps in, that potent leech from whom
 There's no appeal ; who knows no brother leech
 To ask opinion of !—He lays his hand,
 His bony hand, upon the fevered wrist,
 And in a whisper which the deaf might hear,
 The true " stage-whisper " of High Tragedy,
 But oft inaudible to dying folks.
 In accents slow, but yet inflexible,
 He thus discourses to the egotist ;
 " The hour has struck—Eternity begins !—
 " Life's fight is fought—Clutch not at shadows now,
 " Nor buffet phantoms of supposed neglect.
 " None would supplant—None now would take thy place.
 " Sleep mortal, sleep ! Thy passing dreams be peace ! "
 Death is no seer the future to unfold ;
 His healing art, quaint leech, is just to kill.
 One moment more—The spirit flutters forth
 To stand alone in presence of its God—
 Could but the dead return to mortal scenes,
 He'd learn he'd won the field he thought was lost !
 His name is famous—Though he passed away
 Unconscious that mankind were truly just,
 And owned his greatness, whilst they pitying smiled
 To see true Genius peevish as a child !



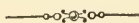
THE ROAD TO JERICHO.



BEGGAR fell, and snapped his wooden leg,
 In a lone country lane—He could not rise—
 An Abbot strolled that way, out for a walk,
 And hastened up, attracted by his cries !


The cripple showed my lord his broken leg,
And begged for help to buy another one ;
“ Is this the road to Jericho, you thief ? ”
The prelate answered, and began to run !

The beggar had more ready wit than faith,
And shouted out, with something like an oath,
“ It is the road to Jericho, my lord ;
“ In you I’ve seen the ‘ Priest ’ and ‘ Levite ’ both ! ”



FOR EVERMORE.



OW after row, the waves roll in,
And make obeisance to the shore,
Chaunting the self-same melody,
FOR EVERMORE ! FOR EVERMORE !

Rank after rank the tides advance,
Libations on the rocks to pour—
This is the chorus of their songs
FOR EVERMORE ! FOR EVERMORE !

Since seas have ebbd and seas have flowed,
With soft-toned splash, or shout of war,
But one refrain they’ve always sung,
FOR EVERMORE ! FOR EVERMORE !

When Time shall droop his wings, and die
Upon the Everlasting shore,
The waves shall chaunt his dirge, and wail
OH, NEVERMORE ! OH, NEVERMORE !

Then shall the Sea of glass and fire—
The Jasper Sea—exulting roar,
Cast up its jewelled sprays, and cry
FOR EVER AND FOR EVERMORE !

LOVE'S ECLIPSE.

FROM THE GERMAN OF MICHAEL BEREND.



THOUGHT the roses were blowing still,
 But they were sear and dead !
 I thought the stars were glowing still,
 But they were quenched, or fled !
 I thought your oath was plighted still,
 But it was gone from you !
 I thought love's torch was lighted still,
 But it had gone out too !

And now that roses, and stars, and love
 In death's embraces lie,
 Thou too my solitary heart
 Would'st steal away and die !

THE UNCONSCIOUS BORE.

FROM THE GERMAN.



AND so I have at last forsaken
 The town in which I loved to dwell !
 Yet when I left, my hand was shaken,
 By none, and no one said "Farewell !"
 No down-cast neighbour said he'd miss me,
 Nor pulled a melancholy face :
 None bit my cheek, in haste to kiss me,
 Nor tore my coat in wild embrace !
 The reason I shall ne'er unravel,
 That, when I went, the folks seemed glad !
 But this I know—Where'er I travel,
 For one at least, my heart is sad !

THE MUD-BUILT TOWN.

A MEDIEVAL LEGEND.

—♦—

SOME little folks had built a town of mud,
With mimic streets, with square, with church
complete,
All quaintly modelled out in clay and dirt.
The priest passed by, and praised their cleverness—
“But children—What!”—the holy man exclaimed,
“The church is there, but why is there no priest?”—
“Please sir,” an urchin cried, “our mud gave out—
“We had no dirt to spare to make the priest!”
The priest was known to be a shabby man :
He asked no more, but briskly walked away,
Resolved his queries should be more discreet,
At least, outside the Church Confessional !

—♦—

THE STRONG EAST-WIND.

A DECEMBER MUSING.

—♦—

THE strong East-wind that breaks the gallant ships
Holds high oration to the list'ning main—
And as his mighty voice rolls out to sea,
The floods lift up their heads, and clap their hands,
And each glad wave returns responsive shout—
“We come ! We come, O East-wind, at thy call,
“To break in thunders on the crashing beach !”

See ! How the billows close their warlike ranks,
And leap, in crested phalanx, o'er the rocks
In wild career, like gods on steeds of foam,
Or ghostly cavaliers in headlong charge—
Now they rush on—and then again retire

All out of breath—and with mad fury spent,
 Till the wild blast rings out again, and calls
 Fresh squadrons up to hurl themselves upon
 The jagged cliffs that fortify the land,
 And mocking, bid the tempest do its worst !

O mighty East-wind ! Tribune of the seas—
 Great demagogue of breakers—Riot's King !
 Forbear thy fierce tumultuous eloquence—
 Appease the shrieking floods. Dismiss the mob
 Of hungry billows to their ocean caves.
 O kindly sun, shine out ! Soft breezes come
 And waft my wave-tost darling to his home !



TOMMY SHEPHARD AND THE LEOPARD.

—◆—



MOKING sat in bungalow
 SERGEANT-MAJOR SHEPHARD—
 Prowling from the jungle, lo !
 Came a hungry leopard.

Sitting on a rustic seat,
 Dreaming least of leopard,
 Knitted, in the evening sweet,
 MRS. SERGEANT SHEPHARD !

Playing in the poultry yard,
 Master THOMAS SHEPHARD
 Heard some creature breathing hard,
 Spied the spotted leopard !

Come to steal a straggling fowl,
 Prowled marauding leopard !
 “Spotted” TOMMY !—With a howl
 Leopard seized TOM SHEPHARD !

Fruitlessly did THOMAS try
To escape the leopard !
MRS. SHEPHARD heard him cry,
So did SERGEANT SHEPHARD !
Over leopard's dappled side
Dangled THOMAS SHEPHARD !
TOM in vain for mercy cried—
Fierce ! blood-thirsty leopard !
Breathless ran across the plain
SERGEANT—MRS. SHEPHARD !
Plainly they'd no chance to gain
On the nimble leopard !
Deftly in the jungle's gloom
Disappeared the leopard—
Dreadful destiny—the tomb
Of torn TOMMY SHEPHARD !
Steadily his course he kept,
Did the lithesome leopard,
To his bloody lair, and leapt
In with TOMMY SHEPHARD !
With that leap it all was up !
For at once, the leopard
Called his wife and cubs to sup
On poor TOMMY SHEPHARD !
Twitching like automaton
Down "red lane" TOM SHEPHARD
Disappeared !—When TOM was gone,
Licked his lips the leopard !
Tommy's face was seen no more
By sad SERGEANT SHEPHARD ;
Yet a solemn oath he swore
To be quits with leopard !
Gun in hand, his nightly watch
Kept stern SERGEANT SHEPHARD,
And at last contrived to scotch
TOMMY's tomb, the leopard !


Put a rifle bullet through
 The hard heart of leopard—
 Dressed his wife in mourning new
 Did sad SERGEANT SHEPARD !

Nightly from that blood-stained coast
 Howlings come like leopard's ;
 People say, the leopard's ghost
 Teazes TOMMY SHEPARD'S !



NIGHTMARE.



N three swinging hammocks we slept,
 Wife and I, and small Tommy between ;
 We were slung up to trees, whilst the keen
 evening breeze
 Waved the leaves to and fro, just to screen !—

I remember 'twas awfully cold—
 We did nothing but shiver and shake ;
 Every swing of each tree seemed to bring down on me,
 Or the wife, or small Tommy, a snake !

Whenever the little one cried,
 'Twas a question, " which should disembark ? "
 Each hammock, you know, was hitched high, and so
 'Twas a ticklish queer jump in the dark !

The grizzly bears grumbled around !
 And then came the jaguar's wild scream—
 Whilst the vampires and bats, and those dreadful wild
 cats

Kept myself and my wife in a steam !

At last, came a horrible din
 Of scalping knives, jaguars and bats ;
 And Indians, that cried with a devilish pride ;
 " NOW, GENTLEMEN, OFF WITH YOUR HATS ! "

"My dear," calls my wife, in a pet,
 "That child is uneasy—poor dove !
 At the foot of that tree is a cup of cold tea ;
 There—jump out, and fetch it, my love !"
 With a horrible shriek and a bound,
 I sprang out of bed, quite made up
 For the cannibal feasts, and the roaring wild beasts
 Which love on a white man to sup !
 That leap from my nightmare and bed
 Awoke me, to think of the cause—
 I had been at the tea, giv'n by sweet MRS. B.,
 For those darling, scalp-taking Chocktaws !



THE PHANTOMS' PIC-NIC.



ONE beautiful midnight of summer, Tom wandered
 Near the lichen-grown gates of a country church-
 yard ;
 The sheep-bells were tinkling—The glow-worms were
 glinting,
 And myriads of dewdrops bejewelled the sward !
 Tom mused and he pondered, and thought of his sweetheart,
 And sniffed up the odour of woodbine and rose ;
 When a flashing and fizzing, like corpse-candles smoking,
 Real "*Will-o'-the-Wispers*," offended his nose !
 Good Providence !—What was poor Tommy's amazement,
 As he crept to the lych-gate, and peeped through the bars—
 Ghosts ! Ghosts upon ghosts, in their hundreds arriving !
 Cried half-fainting Tommy, "A pic-nic, my stars !"
 So it was !—So it was !—a most festive occasion ;
 For the shades of a Sneak and a Slandress had wed ;
 And they'd planned an excursion to visit the graveyard,
 To talk of old times, and bespatter the dead !

Poor Tom ! Trustful Tommy, he never imagined
He should thus be "let in," when "just out" for a walk,
To witness an orgie of spirits on pic-nic,
To see goblins waltzing, and hear their small talk !

Poor Tommy !—He always imagined his duty
Was first to tell truth, if the whole truth were tasked ;
If he heard a bad word of a friend or a neighbour,
He never would blab, nor repeat it unasked !

But the horrible tales which the spectres related,
The cannibal gusto with which they were told,
The shrieks of applause, and the devilish laughter
Made his hair stand on end, and his heart's blood run cold !

Tom shivered, as sprites like an ice-wind brushed by him,
Whilst others in passing almost singed his hair ;
The cold ones, he knew, had no power to hurt him—
The hot ones !—He pretty well guessed what they were !

When the churchyard was thronged, and refreshments dis-
posed of,

Fifty couples stood round where the sleepers were urned ;
The band-master goblin struck up, on his fiddle,
The jig* to which Rome and the Christians were burned !

But "how," some may ask, "were the spectres attired ?"—
The dowager phantoms had black ostrich plumes ;
The gentlemen danced in the bones that they stood in,
Young ladies were draped in long, sheet-like costumes.

With a jump and a whoop, and a skip and a rattle,
With a grinning of teeth and a clatter of bones,
And a whistling of wind through each skeleton carcase,
The dancers whirled off over hillocks and stones !

With bald skulls cocked sideways, and backwards and
forwards,

With symmetrical ribs and the moon flashed between,
With hollows, for ages bereft of their eyeballs,
The revellers indeed were a sight to be seen !

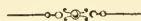
* A celebrated *Allegretto vivace* composed by the Emperor Nero.

Half dazed by the music, and snapping of fingers
Like ivory castanets beating the time ;
Amazed by the whisking, the vaulting and capers,
Tom plucked up his courage, and thought the sight " prime ! "

The spectres buzzed round Tom, and past him, and o'er him,
Till the churchyard itself got so crowded and full,
That the dancers, perforce, took a flight round the steeple,
Or sât in the belfry awhile to get cool !

Then down they came swooping whilst others replaced them,
To take up fresh places again on the sward ;
The fiddles kept scraping, the banjos kept twanging,
And all the best dances were three times encored !

The reels and the waltzes, the jigs seemed unending ;
The sprites danced as though they'd for ever dance on ;
When a cock crowed aloud, and the Eastern sky kindled
With a glimmer of dawn, and the spectres were gone !



XANTIPPÉ.



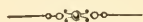
ANTIPPÉ was the famous wife
Of a most famous man—
So was Thérèse—henpecked Rousseau
In dread his queer life ran.

That Socrates, in every way,
Was model spouse, who'll swear ?
But prematurely bald, the gems *
Depict him short of hair.

Was it Xantippé plucked his locks ?
She clouted him 'tis said !
Was it Thérèse of quaint Jean Jacques
A brusque curmudgeon made ?


* The portraits of Socrâtes cut in gems.

The moral is, Philosophers
 Should be in wedlock wise—
 “Domesticated Housekeepers”
 Philosophy despise.
 A sixpence earned for chopping wood
 They can appreciate—
 But as for merit’s slow reward,
 For that they cannot wait !
 And so your Socrates is led
 A most infernal life.
 He only has himself to blame
 Who takes a vulgar wife.
 Language, she thinks, was chiefly made
 To scold the fish-fag down—
 Woe to his peace, if on a book
 Her husband spends a crown !
 With shrewd foresight, Moses forbade
 The ox and ass to yoke
 Together to the self-same plough ;
 He of Xantippés spoke !



PASSING STORM.





 TARK and defined before the narrow belt
 Of dusky red that girt the sullen heavens,
 And saved the sky from being horizonless,
 The solemn trees stood motionless and still,
 As if arraigned by the dread clouds that soared
 In lurid threatening o’er their stately heads ;
 They all stood motionless, as wrapt in thought,
 Like giants listening for the word of doom !
 No leaflet whispered, till a moaning sob,
 A surging wail, an angry, rolling roar

Swept o'er the forest, and the tempest broke
In passionate, uprooting, furious wrath !
The lightnings leaped abroad and rent the rocks,
The floods descended on the foaming lake ;
The waves arose, and scudded to and fro,
Crying aloud responsive to the wind,
Like army panic-struck, or howling mob
In stark dismay, or fierce, vindictive rage !
And so the savage tempest thundered on,
Until its mad, capricious breath was spent,
And the glad sun broke through the scattered clouds,
And laughed the storm to scorn for all its spite,
And made each little raindrop smile and flash,
With sparkling gaiety, at his return !



THE BIRTH OF SPRING.



HE crocuses bring forth their cups of gold,
And priceless, purple Sèvres-ware to pledge
The new-born Spring, on his auspicious birth !—
All nature joins in one applauding shout,
That Winter's King who reigned so cruelly,
Deposed prepares to die, and ere he goes,
Each day sets free some captive thing of joy,
Some form of beauty which he hoped to slay,
But which survives, in spite of all the chains
And doleful rigours of his prison house !

Delighted Nature strews the fields with flowers,
As zephyrs bear upon their blithesome wings
The infant Spring to lay him on his throne—
All hail ! Deliver—Unclouded be
The early days of thy long-prayed-for reign !
Grow strong and mighty—Ceaseless sunshine play
Around thy beautiful, angelic form !

Until, matured to perfect royalty
 Thou shalt put on thy rainbow robes of state,
 Which Summer weaves against the days of June,
 And summon all the world to thy glad court,
 To see thee crowned as King of Flowers, and keep
 For many weeks exulting holiday!



WINTER'S FOGS.



UN, and stars, and sickly moon
 All are faded out!—A gloom
 Broods upon a silent world
 Waiting as for day of doom!

Frosty fetters, iron gyves
 Hold all nature as in death;
 Wheezing, icy, foggy airs
 Gasp like dying men for breath.

Still the pond'rous mill-wheel stands
 Thick with icicles and snow.
 Dank the fields, the hedges white;
 Stifled sounds the cock's faint crow.

Feebly through the choking mist
 Comes the sheep-bell's tinkling sound—
 Lusty watch-dog's muffled bark
 Seems as by enchantment bound!

Soundless the deserted heath,
 Echoless the distant hills,
 And the dim-lit village street
 Voiceless desolation fills!

Is then this the joyous scene
 Where the linnet and the thrush
 Sang their gay, exulting songs
 To the perfume-laden bush?

TRUTH.



HE prophet tells us how, when he would hold
 His peace, and preach no more to listless ears,
 A fire was kindled in his very bones,
 Which, like a seraph's torch, consumed him with
 Its eager flames, until he found his tongue!
 But when the spell of mute despondency
 Was broken through at last, he spoke again,
 With all the scathing fire of fervid Truth—
 He could not hold his peace, but cried aloud,
 In words dictated by the mind of God.
 But yet his hearers laughed the Truth to scorn,
 And sought to slay the "mad enthusiast!"
 But, what is Truth?

So craven Pilate asked,
 Afraid to kill the Just One, more afraid
 To be reported by those vengeful priests
 Who only had the Truth in those dark times.
 And yet God's WORD and TRUTH they gibbeted
 Upon the Cross, because they hated Truth!—
 Yes, what is Truth?—They'd have reported him—
 We mean poor Pilate—miserable cur!
 To his meet master, swell'n Tiberius
 With the red visage, and suspicious scowl.
 Was it Tiberius who a bodkin kept—
 A golden bodkin—just for killing flies?—
 When once a nervous Senator drove up,
 And asked goldstick-in-waiting, tremblingly,
 "Is great my Lord Sebastus now alone?"
 He got this answer—"Yes, my Lord's alone—
 "Yes, quite alone—Not e'en a fly awaits
 "His mighty pleasure, for he's killed them all!"
 Domitian was the prince—Tiberius not,*
 The bodkin-man who loved to torture flies.

* The author has availed himself of a rhetorical artifice to hit two uncanny birds with one stone.

He was the prince who called his House of Lords
Together to advise him how to cook
The very biggest turbot he'd e'er seen !
But about names its folly to dispute
These wretched deeds were *done*—That's what we mean,
And done by thrice-illustrious potentates !
The world's seen things as quaint in modern times.
There was a Hapsburg Emperor who broke
Canaries' legs and wings to see them wince,
And bawled for joy when some poor little thing
Showed more than wonted signs of agony.*
Great God ! What monsters have sat on the throne
Of stifled justice, mercy, goodness, truth,
And how mankind have flattered, crept and crawled,
Around the footstool of such evil beasts,
Forgetting that, in God's own image, He
Has made us all, to stand erect as men.
Thank Heaven, in Europe we've near done with that !—
But we've digressed again, as is our wont—
We were discoursing on the theme of Truth.
Yes, what is Truth ? There lies the crucial test—
We mean no flippant joke on " lies " and *lies*—
But first we'll say, whatever *is* is true.
No cleverness can make a deed undone.
The smallest blade of grass is yet a fact.
If a man picks it, holds it in his hand,
And yet denies he has it, *knowingly*,
A miserable sinner that man is !
A lie offends and breaks God's holier laws,
But also violates His Nature's creed.
To say a thing is not, when it is so,
Insults the pure self-consciousness of things
Which know they do exist just as they are.
As to their really *knowing* what they are,
That is a riddle which we've not quite solved—
At any rate, of this we are quite sure,
God made each thing as it was meant to be.

* See Baron Trenck's Memoirs.

It is a fact—a real fact that lives
For ever, on the Great Creator's mind,
Who ne'er forgets what once He's willed to be,
And to deny it, is to mock the Eye,
The awful eye of Him who never sleeps !
A falsehood, therefore, is a true offence
Against the primal code of primal being,
Embalmed in rocks, and stones, and everything—
Against the code of daily life, by which
We hope to find to-morrow things just like
The very things we see and use to-day.
A lie is always base, for it's untrue.
What now is upright, straight, direct and clear,
May be, nay is, too often, bent awry,
But while it's straight, to say it's bent and curved,
Or while it's bent, to say its lines are straight,
Gives honest, homely facts the lie direct.
Naught is so shocking to a downright man,
A true, God-fearing, fearless gentleman,
As to be forced to hear a craven lie,
Which prudence tells him "you can't contradict,
"It's not your business—Meddle not in strife!"
With what contempt he looks upon the man
Be he prime minister or scavenger,
That deals unblushingly in bare-faced lies !
A lying parson most of all he loathes—
Lies may be clever, dexterously framed—
Glib unveracity is always smart,
And helps the liar to be very proud
Of a neat quickness which the devil prompts.
The world would sooner listen to a lie,
Provided it be sland'rous, and well told,
Than hear an angel's tongue proclaim the truth.
Your ready liar is so "businesslike"—
That miserable phrase of shabby cant !—
As pious rogues do things "on principle,"
Which honest Hottentots would blush to own.

"He is so businesslike"—That means a man
Who never knew a moment's real pinch,
And never did a kindness in his life.
When such a fellow dies, his epitaph
Sets out to future ages, how he ran,
Jaunty and smug, a bright unbroken course
Of affluent respectability,
And how in heaven he holds a harp of gold.
That can't be true! Heaven's not monotonous—
The screw had harped on gold so long on earth,
That doubtless, in the other, juster world,
He spends his leisure time far differently!—
Your "thorough man of business" is well groomed,
Wears faultless linen, and the daintiest boots.
But how he mocks, and gibes, and laughs to scorn
That "seedy Dickens" who has lost his all,
And "will not pay," because his bones were picked
By the shrewd brethren of the vulture tribe!
But yet your "man of business" has a name
For being just—he keeps within the law.
He's such a "just man" as St. Paul describes
"For whom a man would scarcely dare to die,"
Although for "good men" some have even dared.

But let us now come back, and speak of Truth,
Which was our theme, till we our friend espied
In the quaint prism of thought's varieties.
Just ask his clerks—It is no scandal—no—
Just ask his clerks, in your simplicity,
If their rich master does not treat them well?
You think, of course, that they are amply paid.
Good heavens! They're learning to be liars too—
They'll tell you "yes!" but add perhaps, a joke
About poor Tompkins who was "sacked" last week—
The Latin moralist reminds us, that
The bitter truth is often safely told,
Under the cover of a laughing jest.
But what of Tompkins—guileless, truthful soul?

Poor dog, his wife was just confined of twins,
 He'd left his meagre home with anxious heart ;
 A customer came in, and Tompkins asked
 "What is the quality of so and so ?
 "I care not for the price, if it be good."
 Blunt, stupid Tompkins told the honest truth—
 He asked the proper price as it was marked,
 And was o'erheard by our bland "business-man,"
 Who stepped up to the would-be purchaser,
 Who, he perceived, was in the mood to pay
 A tip-top price, to get things really good ;
 "My clerk, Sir," he explained, "makes a mistake—
 "The price he named is for third quality"—
 That was a fact, and so the articles
 Displayed by Tompkins were the same low class—
 "But, Sir, the goods you see are quite the best—
 "Forty *per cent.* we must advance the price."
 The goods were sold, and paid for in hard cash ;
 But when the customer had gone his way,
 Believing in the lie so "businesslike,"
 The "governor" went to his counting-house,
 Sent for poor Tompkins—soundly swore at him,
 Called him a lot of names—Without the oaths,
 "You scoundrel thief to rob me !" sounds quite tame
 "You'll never make a business-man !" summed up
 John Tompkins' "just" employer's coarse tirade—
 When he had done, he wrote a curt receipt
 For a week's wages—Tompkins was dismissed
 "Without a character,"—He could not lie !
 Next Sunday came—His children ate dry bread,
 When they and their sad father came from church !
 The "governor" had also been at church—
 He had a very rare *falsetto* voice,
 And always sang in the choice, surpliced choir*

* This is no unworthy gibe at surpliced choirs. The writer regards them as the happiest means of giving laymen a personal interest and pride in the services of the Church.

All filled by volunteers of good estate.
On "Sabbath mornings" he was mostly there,
But, as at seven o'clock he always gave
A little dinner, to a chosen few
Of worthy chums, he sang but once a day,
Which was enough to "look respectable."
That Sunday night he made the table roar
With his dry, waggish humour, when he told
How "Tompkins called last night at nine o'clock ;
" I let them show him in—Because I knew
" I'd have some fun—He's such a stupid fool !
" He cried, and asked me for the love of God,
" For his sick wife's sake, and the little ones,
" Not to refuse to give a character.
" I said, My man, you should have thought of that,
" Before you told my customer that lie !
" *You* want a character ?—I'll give you one,
" If you will use it—This is what I'll say,
" ' He's honest, sober, very punctual ;
" But, I regret, he's *most unbusinesslike*.'
" If that will serve you, Sir, I'll write it now.
" You want a character ! You Jackass—you ?
" I hope to see you in the workhouse yet—
" The character I'll give will help you there !"

This witty speech convulsed the jovial guests—
But strange to say, the "governor" it was
Who came upon the parish, poor and old !
Tompkins was then a wealthy vestryman,
And never visited the "House" without
Some snuff and half-a-crown to give his foe !
Falseness is mad, when truth is blurted forth
By men whose lips are not so nicely framed
As to spit lies into the face of facts,
And, with a bully's wink, defy the world
To contradict him, and reveal the truth.
Justice seems slow to our impatient wills—
Truth oft is elbowed roughly to the wall,

That gilded Falsehood may ride by in state,
 Whilst Wickedness lifts up its horn, and strives
 To push and trample honest purpose down.
 But every lie is registered in heaven—
 The angel notes it in that awful Book
 Which the great Judge Supreme alone admits
 As “written evidence” against us men ;
 If Truth prevail not now, let none be vexed—
 This life’s appeals are settled in the next !



LYING.



HIS is an age of sleek mendacity—
 Though truth is often told by accident,
 Or if it be upon the winning side—
 A plain, unvarnished tale of real facts
 Is set aside at once, as “barefaced lies,”
 Or else, as garbled, hacked *residuum*
 Of something which at some time did take place.
 Men are so false, and women too alas !—
 They feel no shame in lying sturdily,
 Disowning things they said, and did, and wrote,*
 Which every one that hears them, knows they did,
 And which their very children heard and saw ;
 Of which there is at hand proof positive !
 Yet, unabashed, they brazen out their shame,
 And make ears tingle with their shamelessness !—
 Yet e’en such folk must sometimes feel a pang,
 At being despised by their own flesh and blood !—
 Do simple-minded readers ask amazed,


* One cause of the prevailing untruthfulness and dishonourable dealing of the present time, is doubtless to be attributed to the disgraceful manner in which the honest, impartial witness is browbeaten and tortured with odious insinuations in our law courts. The Advocate’s calling, it would seem, now-a-days is to blacken the guiltless, and to stifle the voice of truth, in the interests of rascality and chicanery. Is this not very nearly akin to what is called in Scripture “taking a reward to slay the innocent” ?

"How is it then such folks are not found out?"
 Heaven bless their trustful hearts! The reason's plain—
 Ill-doers always brand the man who knows
 The awkward truth, the inconvenient fact—
 Brand him as LIAR, everywhere they hear
 His upright name, as a precaution, lest
 He *might* be forced to tell the things he mourns,
 Facts must be spoiled beforehand of their sting—
 None will believe him, if he's known as "liar"—
 Prevention of betrayal, so they think,
 Is better far than any after-cure!—
 So, many a man goes up and down the world,
 Guarding his lips with "fervent charity"—
 Seeking the welfare of his enemies,
 Grieving o'er crimes he never would disclose;
 And yet pursued by a malignant spell
 That bars all confidence, shuts friendly doors—
 Chills kindly feelings, makes him desolate,
 Until at last—baffled, perplexed, sore grieved—
 Rebuffed and shunned by people he would love,
 His heart within him dies, and turns to stone—
 Little he dreams that he has been denounced
 As slanderer,* liar, venomous mad-dog,
 Lest he should blab the secret things he knows,
 But which the culprits in their "self-defence,"
 Have told beforehand, in distorted shape,
 As base inventions of this dangerous knave! †
 'Tis thus wrongdoers, with the devil's shears,
 Contrive to clip the wings of Honesty,
 And hedge its footsteps in with thorns and briars,
 But yet, have patience!—Envy not the liars,
 Who hug themselves upon their clever spite.
 Shall not the Judge of all at last do right?

* It is upon this principle that detected rogues cry "Stop Thief!" to cover their own retreat.

† The writer had before his mind the case of one of the most upright English gentlemen, now deceased, that ever he knew. The malignant perseverance with which he was hunted down, because he knew the inconvenient truth, is almost past belief. And yet he was a man of fervent Christian charity, though he would have no fellowship with deeds of darkness.

BOORISHNESS.


 OW does it happen, brusque imperiousness
 Is oft assumed by men who plume themselves
 On boorishness, and utter disregard
 Of all those little decent courtesies
 That ease the jarring wheels of social life,
 And help the jolting, crazy vehicle
 Across the hundred ruts and stumbling-blocks
 That threaten overthrow at every turn ?
 Some people pride themselves on vulgar tricks,
 On shocking "prejudice," on doing things
 Which would seem quaint amongst the Hottentots.
 Of such it's hard to speak with charity.
 Call them ill-mannered—That were calumny !
 Manners forsooth !—They have got none at all.
 A spruce "Jack-pudding" in an M.B. vest,
 In truth, is bad enough ; a clown far worse—
 We mean by "clown" a clerical Yahoo,
 One too unworldly to behave himself,
 As gentlemen in decent circles do.
 This comes from selfishness, or self-conceit,
 Sham eccentricity, or envious spleen
 At feeling less at ease than other folk—
 To little purpose is it that such boors
 Preach like John Baptists, but behave like swine.
 Gathering wild-honey would be good for them,
 For if done roughly, they'd be stung to death,
 Or driven headlong to the wilderness,
 There to reflect, in suffering discipline,
 That gentle handling, after all, is best !
 Such men as these are always blurting out,
 Before the wearer's face, some rude remark
 On lady's dress ; yet know no more of dress,
 Or what's becoming in a woman's garb,
 Than Adam did before he got his skins !

Such slovens feel their hopeless slouchiness,
 And so revile clean linen and white hands !
 They call it "faithfulness" to flout a host,
 And hostess too, for their solicitude
 To honour them, by asking friends to meet
 (With great misgivings lest they misbehave)
 The great Unwashed, at a well-cover'd board.
 We call to mind a solemn nobody,
 At whom folk laughed some fifty years ago,
 He was "on deputation," so it's called,
 "Pleading the cause" of some benighted race *
 Who ate up men without a pinch of salt,
 But yet, in person scrupulously clean—
 They swam like fishes, and that kept them sweet—
 After the Evening Meeting, where he spoke
 For two long hours, a stranger brought him home,
 To a fine "spread" extemporised for him.
 Once in the supper-room, he glared around,
 And then and there began a fierce tirade
 Against "extravagance and sinful waste"—
 Yet, before supper closed, the pious bear
 Was snoring loud, his head upon the board,
 With a duck's leg between his greedy teeth !

* The writer would feel deeply grieved, were it to be imagined that he sneered in the slightest degree at Missions. They are the glory of our land, and the best indication that a vital Christianity is far from extinct among us. He simply deprecates the delusion that a semi-savage brusqueness, and a vulgar and fanatical defiance of the decent Humanities of life, are the requisite externals of an earnest-minded piety. He well remembers being at a formal evening party, at the house of a clergyman many years ago, where a young married lady was, in the course of the evening, invited to sing, and accordingly did sing "*Kathleen Mavourneen*." Before the last note of the ballad was concluded, the hostess bustled up to the piano, and, almost pushing her guest off the music-stool, commenced singing a hymn, in stern reproof of the levity of her guest, who, when she next called at the house, was gravely lectured on the impropriety of secular music, and also informed that "low dresses" were an "insult to the Almighty." The fair lecturer herself happened to be, almost literally, as tall as a giraffe, and as thin as a slate pencil. It may therefore be charitably supposed that she was, at the moment, thinking of her own personal disqualifications for running counter to Providence in the matter of evening costume, with a somewhat uneasy acquiescence in its inscrutable decrees that had added at least a cubit to her stature, without a corresponding "breadth in the beam," as the Tyrian sailors cited on p. 12, might have called it. No sensible person requires to be told, that all fashions, pushed to the extreme, degenerate into vulgarity, and sometimes even into indecorum.

TOO CLEVER BY HALF.



O wise in their conceits some people are,
So confident that they alone have wits,
That downfalls and rebuffs have no effect
To teach the dolts their utter mawkishness !
They see by intuition ever prompt ;
By inborn, all-embracing cleverness,
What other people always overlook—
They could suggest improvement in the stars !
Their mental paint-pot always is at hand,
With which to daub God's finest masterpiece—
They'd give the rose a smack of lavender—
They'd teach a seraph how to fly with grace—
They'd add a "touch of colour" to the snow—
They'd put a giraffe into four-legged drawers,
And give "crude" Nature's course a "healthier tone !"
Nothing so lovely, but they carp at it—
Nothing so witty, but they're wittier still—
Woe to the wight that is "befriended" by
These paragons of pert rash-mindedness !
At bitter cost, he finds how dearly sold
Was independence, quiet, everything
That makes the life of man supportable.
From that day forth, like Jericho, his house
Has no more walls—Less happy than the town,
The trumpets' clangour brays for evermore !
Invading hosts are always marching through,
And treading down all privacy, all rest,
All independence, every thought of peace—
Until the victim eyes the neighbouring pond,
With wistful looks, as promising escape !

Better to have his ashes thus infused
 For thirsty steers, or even swine to drink,
 Than be provoked to madness every day ! *
 Presence of mind—That means advice to give
 On every mortal thing, these ogres vaunt.
 On all emergencies they're to the fore,
 With their revolting old wives' remedies.
 They swear, the mole is blind because "perverse ;"
 Its hebetude of sight is its own fault—
 "Taken in time," the thing was curable !
 They'd seize the snuffers to "job" off a leg—
 "Better to have it off at once" they cry,
 Never inquiring, could the leg be saved ?
 And if the wretch, who owns the damaged limb,
 Demur to amputation on the spot,
 Or dare to hint that he would keep his leg,
 The amateur SANGRADO bridles up,
 And sweeps off, huffed at "want of confidence !" —
 But EDUCATION is the dismal string
 On which these nuisances for ever harp.
 Your clever pests are great at "training up"
 The "youthful mind," on some transcendent plan—
 That means, they take delight "on principle"
 To make small children swallow nauseous things,
 Which, left from dinner, are brought up for tea !
 They set them SCRIPTURE, as a punishment
 For every trivial fault, to learn by heart ;
 And if they cannot learn it, set them more ;
 And send them faint and supperless to bed,
 To wake to torment fresh at breakfast time !
 Such "training"'s naught but domineering spite,
 And "Christian firmness" of the MURDSTONE † type—
 It shrinks within itself, if firmly met,
 But plays its cruel pranks on hapless babes ;

* The writer fully expects that his book will be tabooed by the *Too Clever by Half* community, ostensibly, as advocating suicide !

† See "David Copperfield," by Charles Dickens.

It joys to see small people in distress ;
And gloats on tears, and helpless agony,
And whips the "rebels" if they look cast down—*
But little ones have rights as well as men ;
And know they have, and only bide their time ;
And treasure up injustice, sense of wrong,
With all the simple, singlemindedness
Of small experience, and straightforward thought !
They smell the rat of arbitrary will
Beneath the coney's fur of guilelessness,
And flout the cant that masks brutality
With "sense of duty," and soft, mealy words ;
But vents its spleen, in savage kicks and blows,
On their defenceless skins and aching heads !—
But why say more of such repulsive folk ?
Had they but power proportioned to their will,
They soon would set the universe on fire,
And hug themselves for making such a blaze !
All know their pompous leer, and knowing wink ;
Their pert pretence to every kind of lore.
If they knew all they hint, they'd beat at once
Wise Solomon himself to fiddlestrings !
Yet strange to say, no Queen of Sheba cares
To go on pilgrimage, to hear their words
Of self-conceit, and crass vulgarity !

* Nothing is more unjust or injurious to children than needlessly, or heedlessly, to expose their faults and failings before strangers. Those who are in the habit of visiting the poorer classes, will call to mind the abominable practice of mothers rating their children before the visitor, for the sake of showing how admirably they have them under discipline. This is generally done whilst the parental sneak sits on the very edge, or on one corner of her chair, with a deprecatory humility, as if it would be far too great a freedom to occupy the entire seat, before so august a patron or patrons ! Happy for the little ones, if they are not, as is too often the case, cruelly knocked about, into the bargain, as soon as the visitors are out of hearing, for being "such a wicked" boy or girl, as the case may be.

THE SCHOOL-GIRL'S DREAM.



MISS LOVELL fell asleep in Church—
 (Next day poor Nelly got the birch)—
 And dreamt, her sweetheart BILLY DOVE,
 In rhyming accents, told his love.

Our lad and lass, from neighbouring schools,
 Made love on Sunday—Little fools!—
 That night the gas was hot, and Nell
 Into a dreamy slumber fell!

She saw her lover by her side;
 He asked her to become his bride.
 She dreamt, a lovely lute he played,—
 And thus, in rhyme, his suit he made—

* * * * *

Were I a bird, I'd heavenward fly,
 And fetch down music from the sky:
 I'd learn the songs that angels sing,
 And for my Nell to earth I'd bring!

Were I a fish, the seas I'd swim,
 And dive for pearls in caverns dim:
 The coral reef should yield its store,
 With amber from the Euxine shore!

Were I a breeze, I'd fan thy face,
 And give it ever fresh'ning grace;
 I'd speed thy boat with perfumed gales,
 I'd flaunt its flag, and fill its sails!

Were I a roving planet star,
 I'd bid thee mount my flaming car—
 At flashing speed, all night we'd roam,
 And ere daybreak, I'd drive thee home!

"Were I a flower"—the youth began,
 When *Mamselle* dropped her book and fan ;
 Frenchwomen are, it's widely known
 To terrible hysterics prone ;
 She gave a whoop, a shriek, a yell
 And down in strong convulsions fell !—
 Poor Nelly woke with sudden start,
 And in her throat she felt her heart !
 At first, around she wildly stared—
 Her whereabouts to know too scared ;
 At last she saw she'd slept in Church,
 The punishment for which was birch !—
 The organ played—the Church broke up—
 The girls walked two and two to sup ;
 Nelly went supperless to bed,
 And sad forebodings filled her head !—
 Nelly was flogged when Monday came,
 Which all the girls declared a shame ;
 Yet vowed they thought, for such a sleep,
 And such a dream, a whipping cheap !

MORAL.

Girls overworked and underfed
 Are sure to sleep in church—
 The pillory is far too good
 For those who rule by birch—
 Scholastic harridans that thrash,
 Should tarred and feathered be !
 And ride face-tailward on an ass,
 For all the world to see ! *

* Some ominous disclosures have recently appeared in the public journals respecting the practice of corporal discipline in girls' schools. One duly authenticated instance of such illegal torture ought to be sufficient to exclude the perpetrator for ever from civilised society, and human sympathies. Whipping is the proper discipline for crimes of violent and deliberate atrocity. A girl that *deserves* flogging is no fit companion for the less hardened of her sex. She is on a par with the degraded vixen that glories in the severities of the rod. The latter ought to be a loathing and abomination to every one that claims the privileges justly due to the gentler sex. A savage woman is the nearest approach to a she-devil that fallen humanity can exhibit.

ELEGY TO A CANARY BIRD.



HERE lies the cold, but priceless clay
Of my beloved Dickey !
How good he was—how blithe—how gay !
How winsome, tame and tricky !

Think not the strange costume he wore
Mark'd him an empty fellow—
A faithful heart was cover'd o'er
By that quaint suit of yellow !

Oh how I loved his voice to hear,
So musical and ringing !
As though an angel from the sphere
Of heaven had taught him singing !

Sweet bird ! He would delight me still,
But for his fatal illness—
I knew my precious pet was ill,
By his unwonted stillness !

Oh ! how it wrung my inmost heart,
To watch my darling moping !
Until I saw his life depart,
I could not give up hoping !

Faintly he hung his little head,
And drooped his wings about him,
And sinking on his groundsel bed,
He flew away without them !

One little pant ! one little sigh—
One little troublous shiver—
Oh ! Happy bird—Is this to die,
With scarce a groan or quiver ?

Know then, ye Wayfarers, that I,
In life, dear Dick respected ;
And when my darling came to die,
I this small stone erected !



ALICE, PRINCESS OF ENGLAND.

DIED DECEMBER 14, 1878.


In Memoriam.



AND can kings die ? Does dreadful death invade
The noble halls of princely palaces ?
Oh, ALICE ! ALICE ! queenly England's pride ;
Pure pattern of the Nation's womanhood ;
Unlike the ill-starred ship that bore thy name,
Thy early doom we mourn, with grateful tears,
Like the physician's death, who gives his life
To heal and soothe the bed of others' pain !
Oh, proud distinction on the muster-roll
Of the world's heroes, who have sacrificed
Their own dear lives beside the suffering sick !
Oh ALICE ! England mourns thee, but with sighs
Of sweet remembrance of thy saintly life.
Death has no bitterness for such as thee !
Rest, gentle lady ! called betimes away
From bleak December's melancholy skies,
To bloom an angel in the world of joy !
Thy home bereaved shall not be desolate,
Filled with the holy calm of thankful love !
Alice ! thy father's soul has welcomed thee,
Fond daughter, at the GOLDEN GATE of Heaven !
Thy little ones so early gone before,
On shining wings flit round thee, come to rest
With them, until GOD's saints are all brought home !
Thy epitaph is writ in England's heart,
" ALICE A MARTYR DIED TO WOMAN'S LOVE ! "

M—— N——, DIED AT AMSTERDAM,
FEBRUARY 20, 1878. AGED 17.

In Memoriam.


 HE cruel month of February's blast
Has sent your flow'ret to its early doom !
Yet the same Month has giv'n the virgin
wreath

Of snowdrop beauty, to adorn her tomb !

The early Springtide is a time of tears,
But yet a time of promise sure to come ;
A few more weeks—and then all Nature hears
The bird's sweet singing, and the bees' soft hum !

Sleep on then, maiden ; thou shalt yet arise !
God's garden waits for such a summertide
As never blossomed under earthly skies—
A time of vanquished grief, and death defied !

DER NIX.

 CH sass am Meeresufer spät,
Im Donner, Blitz und Regen ;
Vom Wasser sprang mir etwas auf,
Gar sonderbar, entgegen !

Sein' Stirn war blass ; die Locken grün
Und länger wie gewöhnlich ;
Sein Angesicht höchst sonderbar,
Halb Mensch, halb Fischlein ähnlich !

“ Wer bist du, Fremder ? ” fragte ich
Erstaunt, doch unerschrocken.
“ Es regnet stark ; willst du den Schirm ?
So bleibst du warm und trocken ! ”

Als ich die Frage endete,
 War er hervor gekrochen
 Und lächelte und sagte : " Nix,"
 Doch hat er auch gesprochen !

Er sagte : " Nix " und niedersank,
 Als wäre nix geschehen—
 Die Leute glaubten fest mit mir,
 Ich habe Nix gesehen !



BETROTHAL.*



RE that dear night when Mary's pleasing thrall
 My fluttering heart, in willing bondage, felt,
 I little thought, with children of the Fall,
 Joys so divine, such godlike rapture dwelt !

The burnished sheen of her resplendent eyes
 Dethroned the stars, and shone instead on earth—
 The harvest moon in vain illumed the skies,
 Eclipsed below by beams of brighter worth.

Her dainty feet, when climbing up the hill,
 From the glad flowers a fragrant welcome pressed ;
 The lovesick brook grew amorously still,
 And took her mirrored beauties to his breast.

Her breath was incense, and her voice was love ;
 Her willing lips the rubied gates of joy.
 Keep far each word, ye Guardian Powers above,
 And envious breath, that might such bliss destroy !

* The above lines and the "Epithalamium" that follows are invested with a melancholy interest to the writer. They were sportively addressed to his late friend and colleague in the Library of the British Museum, Carl Joseph Thanisch, on the occasion of his betrothal and marriage respectively, in 1859. He was a generous-hearted, accomplished man, and a friend of unswerving fidelity.

EPITHALAMIUM.



ANN und Mädchen fest zu binden,
 Hymen wählt nur Blumenketten !
 Dass sie nichts darunter finden,
 Pflegt der Bube oft zu wetten.
 Selten ist zuerst entdeckt,
 Was bei Rosen liegt versteckt !

Spricht die Braut so sanft und leise,
 Wie des Veilchens süsser Hauch ;
 Bräutigam auf gleiche Weise
 Ist den Engeln ähnlich auch ;
 Und die Heimath selbst soll sein
 Gleich dem Himmelreich, so fein !

Wird die Kette erst geschmiedet,
 Klingt das Eisen, welkt die Ros'—
 Weg mit Blumen ! Uermüdet
 Geh'n die beiden Zungen los—
 Dann wird erst mit Gram gefunden,
 Wie der Pfaff sie fest gebunden !

THE PHANTOM SHIP.



SAIL ! a sail !" the boatswain cried ;
 " A ship ! a ship on fire !"
 And lo, from out the brimming sea,
 Her masts kept rising higher !

She seemed to scud before a gale,
 With lightning wings endued ;
 She flew !—She flew like vulture bird,
 Or horse by wolves pursued !

We saw her hull ; we saw the surf
Right o'er her bulwarks break.
On, on she rushed with swerveless course,
Right in our vessel's wake.

With every stitch of canvas set,
From helm to bow alight,
She seemed resolved to run us down,
In wanton, reckless spite.

Nearer, and yet more near she came—
A gruesome sight to see !
We heard hoarse laughter on her decks,
And hideous revelry.

Her every rope and spar was traced
In strange, unearthly light.
In trembling awe, our seamen shrank
From such a fearful sight !

Ablaze the grisly craft appeared—
Ablaze from stem to stern,
And yet the stinking, brimstone fires
Seemed not to scorch or burn !

Her shrouds were strung with grinning skulls,
Aloft the black flag floats,
Huge coffins from her davits hung
In ghastly jest for boats !

Her steersman was a skeleton,
Her captain was a ghoul,
And on her deck and yards a crew
Of jabbering demons foul !

The spray athwart her sides and bows
Flew up in crackling sparks—
And helter-skelter in her wake
Swam shoals of horrid sharks !

We heard the spectres yell for joy,
We saw them dance for glee,
As they bore down upon our ship,
And mocked our agony !

In mortal dread our skipper gazed,
And bit his trembling lip,
And bid the helmsman put about,
To dodge the Phantom Ship.

We tacked in vain !—The cursed craft
To foil in vain we tried ;
She closed with us, and ran stem on,
Full tilt against our side.

We had no power to speak or move ;
Our palsied tongues grew dry ;
We waited for our ship to sink,
Without a prayer or cry.

'Twas like a weird and grisly dream,
That Phantom Ship and crew—
Some hellish vision of the lost,
That we were sailing through.

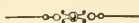
We felt the demons' fetid breath
Upon each ashy face ;
They swarmed like vampires in the air,
Or bats of devilish race !

The fiend-ship seemed to leap our decks,
Our riggings did not lock ;
No single rope or spar was harmed ;
We felt no jar or shock !

The barnacles upon her keel
We saw as clear as day ;
We saw the sharks spring o'er our decks
And dive and swim away !

Great Heavens above ! How glad we were
To see them disappear ;
And as the Fiend-ship faded out,
We gave a ringing cheer.

Our skipper vowed it was the Cross
That saved our ship from harm ;
The double Cross upon our flag,
That broke the devilish charm.



SEA SONG.



IFT up your heads, ye stately waves !
Join hands, and measured cadence keep,
And sing to me in chorussed strains
The war-songs of the mighty deep.

Lift up your heads, and clap your hands,
Like giant cymbals' clash sublime—
Like kettledrums, or castanets
To marching Titans keeping time !

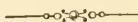
Ring out, ye gales, a brave fanfare !
Blow, clarion winds, your loudest blast ;
Call up the legions of the deep,
To ride in serried squadrons past.

Wave, white-plumed warrior-billows, wave
Your dancing, snow-white crests, and crash
Against the cliffs—as men-at-arms
Their swords against their bucklers clash !

O sea ! O sea—Swash-buckler sea !
Thy war-songs are but empty boasts—
Thy pirate-waves are laughed to scorn,
By grains of sand that guard the coasts !

Sail on, ye fleets ! Glide on, ye ships !
 Beat down the waves ; the surfs defy—
 Spread your white canvas to the winds ;
 And let your painted streamers fly !

Fly on ! Fly on ! Bank up your fires—
 Ply thundrous paddle-wheels or screw,
 Until at last Old England's cliffs
 And Dover's heights appear in view !



DER HUSAR.



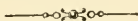
AESE, Wurst, Schnaps, Bier und Schinken,
 Vornehm essen, vornehm trinken,
 Liebt der lustige Husar !

Wenn die Nahrungsmittel fehlen,
 Ist er auch bereit zu stehlen—
 Krieger lieben die Gefahr !

Warum sollte er sich schämen
 Solches nützlich Zeug zu nehmen ?
 Ist er nicht ein braver Mann ?
 Und die feindlichen Dragoner
 Würden nicht die Leute schonen,
 Kämen sie zum Ort heran !

Kommt er aber unempfohlen,
 Lebensmittel abzuholen,
 Nimmt der Bauer sein Gewehr ;
 Pulver, Blei hinein zu giessen
 Und den bunten Dieb zu schiessen,
 Macht ihm die Verdauung schwer !

Fragen aber nicht Soldaten,
Wenn es Mangel giebt an Braten,
"Was ist mein, und was ist dein?"
Heute haben sie vergessen
Woher kam das Abendessen,
Ohne Geld und ohne Schein!



JOY'S ECLIPSE.



ONE fair September afternoon,
Joy basking lay upon the beach;
The sea was flecked with sunlit sails
Far as the roving eye could reach!
All nature flashed like burnished gold,
The breeze was balm, the air was warm;
When lo, a blinding mist came down
Eclipsing every sparkling form!
The downcast waves refused to smile,
The breeze, so lately warm, grew chill;
A moping melancholy reigned,
And every sound of mirth was still!
The soul of Joy within him died,
For very pain and grief, to know
The world itself was not so fair;
It was the sun that made it so!
Alas! that sun and clouds should make
The sum of joy or grief to men—
And, if the light be overcast,
Bliss should change back to gloom again!
Shine out, then Sun, and flout the mists—
Chase envious fogs and griefs away!
Few are the gleams of ruddy joy
To cheer man in his short-lived day!

THE CLOUD-DRAPED SEA.



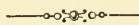
SEA ! O sea !—O cloud-draped sea !
 Striped with wan streaks of sunlight pale ;
 Smiles play across thy troubled face—
 But on thy trembling lips a wail !
 O sea ! O sea, dejected sea !
 Why dost thou smile ? Why art thou sad ?
 Is it the mocking, prating wind
 That tells some freak of frolic mad ?
 Is it the thought, O lowering sea,
 Of winter's wrecks, that makes thee frown ?
 Or dost thou smile in irony,
 That ships must sink and seamen drown ?
 Put off thy sullen guise, O sea !
 Shine forth in sunlight radiance dressed ;
 Spite of thy heartless perfidy,
 We love thee in thy beauty best !

SUMMER AND WINTER.



SUMMER comes and summer goes,
 Roses bloom and roses fade !
 Ere the summer's half enjoyed,
 Winter strips the sighing glade.
 Summer shines, and summer wanes,
 Roses fade and roses bloom,
 But, when all their joys depart,
 They for other joys make room.

Winter days have keen delights
 To the summer heats denied ;
 See the jovial curling match ;
 See the lusty skaters glide !
 Fading summers leave regrets,
 Fading winters comforts bring ;
 Snowdrop bells and swelling buds,
 Whispered promises of spring.
 Bright the stars of winter's skies,
 Crisp beneath the foot the snow,
 Robins sing on jewelled twigs,
 Clear the frosty fires glow !
 Winter may have frozen charms,
 Frigid beauties—I prefer
 Summer's heats, and jovial sounds,
 Summer's radiant life and stir !



JAMES DIGNAM, ESQ.

Died *March* 12, 1877, aged 75.*

An Memoriam.



LIFE is a river rushing wildly on,
 Bearing us onward to the pathless sea—
 Friendships are beacons set upon its banks,
 To mark our progress to eternity !

Friendships are many when we first embark,
 We scarcely note them, until, one by one,
 They dimly fade, as we approach the sea—
 In solitude life's closing years we run !
 Farewell ! Brave soul—thy guileless rectitude,
 Thy gentle life, thy fervent charity
 Live in our hearts, we mourn thee not as lost—
 Example bright of sweet integrity !

* One of Nature's own Nobility.

THE STORMY SEA.



HE skies are grey ; the clouds are leaden-hued !
 With lunging rolls, the heaving ships toil on ;
 With swaying masts, they rock from side to side,
 Their hulls uplifted in the billows' arms,
 And then deep-sunk in troughs of roaring brine !
 Awed by the breakers on the surf-beat rocks,
 No lesser craft dares venture out of port !
 The sea-birds dip between the crested waves,
 Or beat up slowly 'gainst the driving gale.
 Earth, sea, and sky look wan and colourless ;
 Discomfort flies abroad on sounding wings,
 And deafening tumult stuns all sense of joy !
 Is this the scene, so dull and comfortless,
 That was but yesternight ablaze with gold ?
 Is this the sea with molten sapphires paved—
 The glowing type of soft, voluptuous rest,
 And on whose bosom lusty sunlight basked ?
 Where is the South-Wind gone, and where the Sun ?—
 Where are the briny odours breathing life,
 Kindling the cheek, and filling the glad pulse
 With bounding sense of freedom and of health ?
 Where are the jocund songs—the painted skiffs
 With laughing freights of living beauteousness ?
 Gone like the rainbow ; faded like a dream !
 O life ! O life of men ! How like the sea !
 One day unmatched, alluring loveliness,
 The next, a sunless blank bereft of light,
 Grey, desolately grey, joyless, forlorn,
 Like harvest field despoiled of its ripe charms,
 Or mildewed arras—faded tapestries
 That hang in banquet-halls deserted, closed,
 Where spiders weave, and fretting moths destroy.

SONG OF THE MIDNIGHT BREEZE.



HAPPY spirit once I was,
Brought up in Eden's bowers ;
Thrice evil day for me in which
I left my native flowers !

Oft, standing at the gates of bliss,
I'd seen the world afar ;
And many wondrous tales I'd heard
About that peopled star.

And so one morn I wandered down,
Resolved to see the place
Where Paradise had bloomed, and where
Yet dwelt Man's godlike race !

In wonderment awhile I roved
Midst Western lakes and floods,
By Egypt's foaming cataracts,
And India's fields and woods.

'Twas there a maiden I beheld
On Gunga's sacred shore ;
The moment that our glances met
I lived for heaven no more.

Oh, wondrous fair she must have been,
That lovely earthborn child,
To win an angel's love like mine,
When first on me she smiled !

I thought not of my radiant home,
Or fields that gave me birth ;
The only wish I knew was this,
To live for her on earth.

Then I was hers, and she was mine—
 Oh, how the seasons passed !
I never thought, how cruel death
 Forbids earth's joys to last.

One night we roved, and many a tale
 I told of Eden's land ;
My beauty stooped to pluck a flower ;
 A serpent stung her hand.

I saw that she was dying fast,
 But, in her mortal pain,
She pointed to the skies, and said,
 " Love, meet me there again."

With many tears I buried her,
 In that still eventide ;
And then, like thought I upward flew
 To seek my angel-bride.

All through that night, I travelled on,
 To reach the realms above ;
And asked each spirit that I met,
 If he had seen my love ?

Oh joy ! whene'er they smiled assent,
 And praised her beauty rare ;
One told me she was safe arrived,
 And did await me there !

Up, up I flew swifter than light,
 Beyond creation's bound ;
And when the morning broke on earth,
 I stood on holy ground.

Once more the melody I heard
 Of the celestial rills ;
I saw the glow that shines upon
 The Everlasting Hills.

Yet think not that to gaze upon
The prospect fair I stayed,
For heaven was now no heaven to me
Without my beauteous maid.

I heeded not the perfumed airs,
The songs from every wood,
But still sped on, till at the gates
Of Paradise I stood.

But when beneath those gates arrived,
Their crystal bars were closed,
And cherubim with fiery swords
My entering in opposed !

And now, amazed, I trembling read
Inscribed above the door :
“ He that compares the world with Heaven,
“ Is meet for Heaven no more !”

And, oh, despair ! as mute I wept,
Too faint for grace to call,
My bride stretched out her radiant arms
Upon the shining wall !

To scale those battlements of light
It was in vain to try ;
The flaming swords appeared to reach
Through all immensity.

The angels cried : “ Concerning thee,
“ ’Tis writ in Heaven’s decrees,
“ To follow Darkness round the world,
“ And be the MIDNIGHT BREEZE !”

And then, in spite of all my tears,
I through the air was hurled ;
And lighted on this earth again,
As night closed on the world.

And ever since, I've followed night
 From North to Southern pole ;
 And in the twice twelve hours we make
 The circuit of the whole.

But nightly, as through India's land
 We pass, I to the grave
 Repair, and sigh o'er her who sleeps
 By Gunga's flowing wave.

My only thought is of the day,
 The day that shall restore
 My bride to these fond arms again,
 More radiant than before !



THE IDLE SUMMER WIND.



CRUEL Summer-Wind, that smites the rose,
 And rends its petals from the grieving sprays,
 Like crimson snows to heap them on the
 ground—

Oh ! jealous babbler, that strikes down the stars,
 The gleaming stars of the chaste jessamine,
 To strew them fading on the wondering earth !

Ah yes ! Earth marvels that such beauteous things
 Should be condemned by envious blasts to die——
 Blow on ! Blow on !—Yes, get thee far afield—
 Shake every forest tree, each elm, each pine,
 Each aged oak-tree from its drowsy trance.
 Curl up the brooklets ; lash the placid lakes
 Into an ecstacy of foaming wrath
 To see their mirrored waters broken up,
 Unable to reflect heaven's gracious blue !
 Blow on ! Blow on, until all nature thrills
 With the daft gusts of thy capricious spite,

And listens shuddering to thy boastful voice,
Which tells how fairest things, in wanton freak,
Thou hast destroyed, and rent, and brought to naught !

Thy voice is loud, O cruel, idle wind !
But yet, each gust that tells thy triumphs forth,
Wafts o'er the fields, upon their way to heaven,
The gentle souls of flow'rets thou hast killed !

O braggart Wind ! Thy tale of blustering might
Is all unnoticed, for the fragrant psalms,
Which every blossom chants before it dies,
Tell pleadingly its wrongs, as it ascends
To lay its sweet appeal before God's throne !

O boastful, idle Wind ! Hast thou no fear,
And no account to give for fair ones slain ?
Swiftly they fly on thy vainglorious wings
To seek their balmy home in Paradise—
They utter no reproach—But yet, amazed
All Nature listens to the whispered dirge,
The fragrant death-song sung by dying flowers ;
And mourns to think a gust of caitiff wind
Has power to drive away from earth to heaven,
From pining earth such peerless loveliness !

Thus idle spleen can, in one moment brief,
Do a mad deed that fills the world with grief !



EDGED TOOLS.



SMOCK-FROCKED clown strolled gaping at
the shops

Of a great city, dazed with what he saw.
He'd never seen a town in all his life ;
And as he sauntered down the glittering streets,
He passed a Bank, and was sore "exercised"


To guess what could be sold at such a house !
 A clerk lounged at the door. The yokel asked,
 " Tell me, good sir, what sort of wares you sell ? "
 The clerk looked at him with serene contempt—
 " You want to know, wiseacre, what we sell ?
 " We deal in asses' heads !—Can I serve you ? "
 Chaw-bacon scratched his pate, and thus rejoined :
 " I might have guessed it ; and I pardon crave
 " For my stupidity. Forgive me, sir,
 " We young men from the country are so dull !
 " But I would fain congratulate you on
 " The roaring trade you must have done to-day ;
 " You seem cleared out of stock ; besides your own
 " I see no ass's head about the place—
 " Do you stand here as an advertisement ?—
 " I'd tie you up, lest you should trot away,
 " And not be found ; an ass's head so prime
 " Will surely make the fortune of the firm.
 " They never sold a donkey's head like yours !"—
 And then he added, as he turned his heel ;
 " Don't think, my man, that all who wear a blouse,
 " And know not ' City manners,' have no wits—
 " You've had your answer for to-day, at least—
 " I tell you what—Beware how next with ' fools '
 " You handle repartee, and such edge-tools !"



THE LOST HUSBAND AND THE FISH DINNER.

ADAPTED FROM THE GERMAN.



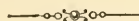
"  CROSS the blue sea-wave away !
 " In yonder painted steamboat gay,
 " Unmoved by wind or rushing tide,
 " As in a fiery car I'll ride !
 " 'Tis time to start. Dear wife, farewell !
 " The steam is up ; I hear the bell—

“It sounded twice, and when again
“It rings, yon ship must plough the main !”
Thus spake a brave and gallant youth,
With heart of oak, and tongue of truth.
His bride a parting kiss he gave,
And sobbed aloud, that husband brave !
By force himself away he tore,
And left his weeping friends on shore.
The captain gave the word, and then
His troubles all began again !
With hammer, pound, with hiss and shriek,
With groans and moans, with crack and creak,
Like courser of tremendous might
The vessel soon flew out of sight !
Where'er he turned his swimming eye
Our hero saw but sea and sky ;
And oh ! those waves of tempting blue,
How false they were he quickly knew !
With pitch and toss, with heave and roll,
The ship flew swiftly to the goal,
Until in port she anchor cast,
And Richard was himself at last !
I should, ere this, the cause have told,
And reason why our traveller bold
Left hearth, and home, and loving bride,
To sail across the salt sea-tide.
He went to seek what love, nor wealth,
Nor friends could ever give him—Health !
He did not rove to do the gay thing,
But rest his mind, and take sea-bathing.
The day he came the tide was in—
His story is short—He must begin ;
And so he posted off to reach,
At once, the shell-bespangled beach !
A nice machine he quickly chose—
Went in, and laid aside his clothes ;
And then, with laudable emotion,

He plunged into the German Ocean !—
But as he blithely swam about,
And ducked his head, and popped it out,
Some monstrous fish—Forbear to laugh—
Seized Richard tightly by the calf !—
The monster thought it veal no doubt :
But soon the luckless man found out
A fact before he didn't know,
That fishes' weal is human woe !
In vain he shrieked and clutched the line,
The fish was quite resolved to dine,
Held gamely on, and dragged him under,
And gulped him down—Oh monstrous flounder !
The people standing on the shore
Beheld him writhe, and heard him roar ;
They saw him disappear, full well,
But where he went they could not tell !

His mother sits at home and says,
"I wonder Dick so long delays !"
And, closely crouching at her side,
Loud weeps his lone, distracted bride.
Week after week no husband came !
At last outspoke the aged dame—
"To starve, as well as weep, is folly
"Good cheer's a cure for melancholy !
"This child won't fret so much, when in her
"She has her pint of stout and dinner.
"We'll try it for to-day at least,
"And have a really rousing feast !"
That day smoked on the board a dish
Of flounders, most gigantic fish,
And mother, sister, bride, with zest,
Themselves to eat the fish addressed !
The bride, as suffering most from griet,
Resolved to seek and find relief.
She took the very biggest flounder,
And 'gan to eat, as duty bound her.

Great Jove ! When she had cut it open,
Her horror and amazement no pen
Of mine could paint—for leering at her
She saw her husband, on the platter !



ON A PICTURE OF A MAN SLAIN BY A HYDRA.



OF great excess in hydromel
Died Attila, on wedding day :
Depicted here a man that fell,
You see, in fierce hydra-melée !

Long time unscathed this warrior fought,
And scarred the hydra's scaly hide.
Hydraulic pressure on his throat
His enemy at last applied !

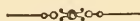
Then drooped the fainting hero's head,
Triumphant hydra hissed clate—
Yet smiled the dying man, and said,
“ Mine is at least historic fate !

“ Friends, bury me, but don't embalm ;
“ And write,” he to his comrades cried,
“ Here lies a man in slumbers calm
“ From hydra's bite, but not high dried !”

His comrades heard with bursting heart,
And when they had the hydra slain,
They tried, by hydropathic art,
To bring their friend to life again !

But when they saw 'twas all in vain,
Not being in hydrostatics skilled,
They sang, in high dramatic strain,
The dirge of him by hydra killed !

The first hydrographers shall tell,
 How he the hydra's force defied—
 High-minded fought, and fighting fell,
 Nor then of hydrophobia died!



VOICES OF THE NIGHT.

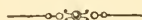
FROM THE GERMAN OF HEINRICH HEINE.



OLDEN-FOOTED stars are creeping
 Softly through the realms of light,
 Whilst the tired world is sleeping
 Softly on the lap of Night!

Listening stand the silent forests,
 Nature lends attentive ear,
 'Cross the plain the giant mountain
 Flings abroad his shadowy spear!

List!—What breaks the conscious silence?
 Yet the tuneful echoes swell!
 Is it thou, my best-beloved,
 Or the voice of Philomel?

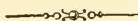


EARTHBOUND.




MY soul is dull: it flutters forth a space,
 But cannot mount, with free, unfettered course,
 Above the vapours that conceal the sun,
 And render lustreless the very flowers!
 It would break free, and soar aloft to heaven,
 But leaden sorrows seem to weight its wings;
 And, like the flying-fish of tropic seas,
 Which skims a little space above the waves,

And then falls back into the pathless main,
To be the prey of its pursuing foes,
So my poor tired soul makes vain resolves
To seek the airs serene in which it basked,
Remote from earthly cares, and mundane strifes,
Drinking new life at Thought's celestial fount,
Refreshing hope at Fancy's bounding springs,
Forgetting pain, by holding converse with
The speaking shadows of the golden Past !
But Memory's mirror-glass itself is blurred
With tears, and dust, and countless specks of grief,
That it distorts the shapes I would behold,
Or gives them back, not as I fondly hoped,
But as the shrouded ghosts of dead delights,
Wan, melancholy shades that never smile,
But add intensity to rayless gloom !



MAY-DAY.



H, gaily breathe the mellow flute,
And deftly strike the jocund lute,
For Winter died to-day !
Wake, festive Song ! and southern gales,
Imprisoned long in icy jails,
Shall bear the notes away !

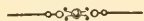
Long as the gloomy tyrant reigns
Chill torpor binds the hills and plains,
The woods are still and lone ;
But when in Spring's soft arms he dies,
Pale Melancholy leaves the skies,
And Pleasure mounts his throne !

The fields and brakes no more are sad,
 The woods unvocal and unclad,
 No longer bleak the hills—
 For all the founts of love and mirth,
 Unsealed again, to gladden earth,
 Gush forth in sparkling rills !

Ye nymphs of woodland and of glade,
 Who love the soft refreshing shade
 Of spring-tide's early green,
 Come forth, and fearlessly survey
 Your leafy haunts, your gardens gay,
 Where Death of late has been !

See hyacinth and luscious May,
 Primrose, and polyanthus gay,
 Their painted sweets unite !
 See peach and apple-bloom combine,
 In contrast rich, their hues divine
 With pear and cherry white.

But yet, your notes of joy too high
 Raise not—Though Winter seemed to die,
 He might again awake !
 Then would the tyrant climb once more
 To the cold seat he held before,
 And Joy the world forsake !



DEATH-STRUCK.



ISHEVELLED Autumn, with her face of care,
 And dripping robe, and wildly tangled hair,
 Knocks at each homestead's door, importunate ;
 And in her train, a wild and blustering brood
 Of noisy winds, with clamours loud and rude,
 To rush inside the opened portal wait !

Ah why so soon, most melancholy, drear,
 And joyless season of the changeful year,
 Art thou returned to fill the world with grief?
 Is Beauty vain? and has the fragrant breath
 Of Loveliness no magic power 'gainst death?
 And is the reign of Joy indeed so brief?

The uncomplaining flowers, sweet babes of earth,
 On the cold breast of her that gave them birth,
 In mute despair, have laid them down to die!
 The fields are hushed! Amid the forest's gloom,
 The timid leaf steals to his quiet tomb,
 And shivering birds to genial climates fly!

Then blow, ye tempests! Welcome, storm and cloud!
 Come, reverend Winter! spread thy snowy shroud
 O'er Beauty's grave, till Spring returns again:
 Then Joy and Mirth fresh garland crowns shall wreath,
 Pleasure awake, and jocund Zephyrs breathe
 A soft *Resurgam* to a sleeping plain!

ANACREONTIC.



DELIA is fair, her flashing eye
 Has a strange, restless lustre—
 But that is just the reason why
 I do not care to trust her!

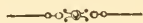
Her glance is flame; the wondering stars
 Look down, and mute adore her—
 And all the glistening things of earth
 Appear to pale before her!

She walks afield, the flow'rets bend
 With reverential feeling;
 As though she were their deity,
 And they her subjects kneeling!

Nor voiceless things alone she binds
 With spells they cannot utter ;
 Where'er she goes, men's hearts begin
 Like aspen leaves to flutter.

But, as the fickle Zephyr sets
 The quivering leaves in motion,
 And passes on—She too disdains
 The fondest heart's devotion.


Unconscious as the fragrant rose,
 She heeds nor vows nor sighing ;
 Nor casts one pitying look on those
 Of her own sweetness dying !



DROWNED.

FROM THE GERMAN OF MICHAEL BEREND.



E drifted across the listless sea,
 The sails flapped loose and idle ;
 The pilot leant on the tiller-wheel,
 And slackened the good ship's bridle.

The wavelets fondled our gallant bark,
 Caressingly round her flocking ;
 The ocean dozed in oblivious trance,
 With gentle heavings rocking.

But lo ! In the deep-green waves we spy
 A beautiful lily tossing ;
 As though Aphrodité, foam-sprung maid,
 Were her native billows crossing !


Yet anguish flashed from her meek, faint eye,
 Mutely for help imploring,
 That some one would lay her panting charms
 On the firm deck's oaken flooring !

Alack! that the ruthless waves should drown
A lily so young, so peerless!
But we floated past, and the lily was left
To sink in the ocean cheerless!



BOAST NOT! BOAST NOT OF THE MORROW!



OAST not! Boast not of the morrow!
Canst thou reckon on to-day?
In the midst of laughter, Sorrow
Steals the soul of Mirth away!

Boast not in thy youthful vigour!
Age is like a little cloud
Which is ever waxing bigger,
And at last shall all enshroud!

Trust not in deceitful riches!
Night has oft the day undone,
Like the ne'er-advancing stitches
Which Ulysses' partner spun!

Rest not in thy learning fangled!
Intellect's a subtle thread,
And if once the skein be tangled,
Reason is for ever fled!

Thirst not after martial glory
Which survives a span of years:
Who would see his short-lived story
Writ with mingled blood and tears:

Fluttering Love is a deceiver!
Like the hoarfrost, bright appears,
Decks his flower, and hastes to leave her
In despair, dissolved in tears!

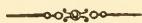
Oft the anchor-chain has parted
 When the storm was almost past,
 And the skipper, broken-hearted,
 Saw his vessel wrecked at last !

So the brimming cup of Pleasure,
 Slipping from the trembling clasp,
 Leaves, instead of golden treasure,
 Shadows in the holder's grasp !

There is naught on earth abiding ;
 All things hasten to decay ;
 And the very brooklets gliding
 Wear the hardest stones away !

Tell me what is worth the trusting,
 If the world be all a cheat—
 Pleasures fleeting—treasures rusting—
 Things substantial blank deceit ?

This is truly worth thy knowing—
 What thy Future state shall be,
 And that thou art daily growing
 Fitter for Eternity !



ONLY A WAITER !



MUSING stood, and gazed at vacancy,
 Through the bleared windows of that dingy inn—
 How it did rain ! The dogs ran dripping home ;
 The draggled cocks and hens had given it up,
 And steamed beneath the moisture-dropping eaves.
 None stirred abroad. At last a funeral
 Passed down the street of that quaint foreign town.
 Just five or six, in threadbare, well-worn black
 Followed the coffin ; but all wore dress coats,
 And white cravats, and trows of "evening" cut.
 I was absorbed—But yet the little train

Of real mourners woke me from my dream,
And brought some idlers to their doors to gape.
It was an humble group—a scant cortége.
Few hats were lifted as the dead passed by—
It was a poor man's funeral, you see—
No nodding plumes ; but little faded crape !
The undertakers walked as if ashamed
To be conducting such a paltry pomp.
But yet the quaint simplicity of woe,
The air of grief unfeigned the mourners showed,
Made me at last awake, and say aloud—
"Those honest chaps at least seemed really sad !"
I cried *Garçon !* The waiter bustled up
Expecting some good order—

"Whose," I said,
"Is that poor corpse that now is passing by ?"
"Only a waiter's, Sir !" the man exclaimed,
In not unkind, but deprecating tones,
As though I'd wished to hear some famous name.
I heard a sob—kind soul, he was in tears !
"Excuse me, Sir ! But how I loved that man.
"He was a real gentleman at heart,
"Although a waiter must wear evening dress.
"Like cabmen, waiters have their enemies.
"Some people say we're a rapacious tribe.
"They little think how hard we have to work.
"And who befriends the waiter when he's ill ?
"No, he must stand, and smile, pay compliments
"Half the night through. Then, when the spoons and
forks
"Are counted over, he's allowed to go,
"In wind, and rain, and sleet, and winter's snows,
"To his hard pallet in his garret home !"

Another waiter, who spoke English less,
Just then stepped up, and for his colleague spoke—
"Juste ask ze *Curé*, vot zat vayter voss.
"He'd say 'Monsieur, his heart voss verrah large !'

" His brosser's vidow, and her shildren too,
 " He fet and closed, although he voss so sick
 " For monss before he dite ! But his small hoard
 " At last gave in, and zen poor Jacques hisself
 " Passed slowly to the grafe. Yes ! There he goes—
 " And vee his frendts have paid ze funeral——
 " Pardon, zat you have seen *mon camarade* veep ;
 " But zo a vayter, it is sat to die,
 " And leaf von's brosser's leetle vons to starfe ! "



A CHAT WITH PUSSY.



Q H Puss ! Dear feline friend ! There—lap your milk—

Example snug of true felicity !

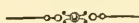
Red glow the coals, and in the chimney roars
 The freezing East wind, that with gusty whirls
 Piles up the snowdrift, and then scatters it
 With fickle fury, to take refuge in
 Some other sheltered nook, some porch or coign—
 And then again with storming, panting rage
 Catches the flakes and strews them o'er the fields.
 Yes, Pussy, lap your milk. It is no night
 For man or beast to be abroad.

Oh hark !

There falls the ancient elm. He stands no more—
 Uprooted giant—What a sounding crash !
 How sad to think when April comes again,
 To comfort wood and field for winter's frosts,
 And bid the forest trees put forth their leaves,
 Our upturn patriarch will know him not !

Yes, there he lies across the lawn. That gleam
 Of sudden moonlight showed me he was down ;
 But yet he waves his arms defiantly,
 And battles with the blast, the choking blast,

That shrieks because it cannot strangle him,
But must be dead itself weeks ere he dies.
Oh Puss ! All cats, they say, have got nine lives—
Unlike the elm, they fall upon their feet.
But who would live a second life like this ?
Look at the Elm !—He now indignantly
Beats back the blast with his strong, sounding arms.
But when the wind goes down, he'll yield him to
The fate that dooms him to a lingering death !
For weeks his arms will point imploringly—
Will point to heaven, and ask for leave to die.
Perchance he'll see the other trees put on
Their spring-tide robes. And then the axe and saw
Will finish what the storm began to-night.
Men will forget the once majestic elm,
Forget the spot where centuries he stood—
He'll only be sixpenny-worths of wood !



EARLY WINTER.



DEJECTED Winter weeps outside the doors,
And freezing winds congeal her sleety tears !
Soon will the fountains of her early griefs
Be changed to stony-visaged ruggedness—
The furrows of her tears be frozen up—
December's wail of passionate despair
Be heard no more across the snow-clad fields.
The mute, enduring world will hold her peace,
And, bound in frosty chains, give up the ghost !

So die our joys ! At first we sore bemoan
The stern decree that slays each comeliest thing.
Fancy and love plead piteously against
The cruel fate that strangles, one by one,
Each earth-born pleasure, oft as soon as born,

And never rests till its assassin gripe
 Has killed all promises of early days !
 At last, the soul resigned—or dumb with grief—
 Inured to see her innocents destroyed,
 Looks on in silence, whilst the tyrant's hands
 Slay her last darlings. Then, with one faint sigh,
 The broken Heart itself prepares to die !



TRUST NOT THE WAVES.



HERE is a glamour in the cruel waves,
 A witch-like glitter in their sea-green rays ;
 Enticingly they languish in the sun,
 To lure the simple where the quicksand lies !

Where swift destruction waits the mariner,
 Most beautiful the coasts and foam-girt bays ;
 Rocks lurk in ambushade, and shoals keep watch
 Beneath the jovial surfs and rainbow sprays.

Trust not the waves ! Trust not the courtly words
 Of fawning selfishness. Few are the friends
 Who, like the sea-girt cliffs, stand always firm :
 Complaisant nothingness in nothing ends !

Trust not the waves ! Bestow a lesser trust
 On those who smile, caress, and straightway swear
 A life-long friendship on a moment's whim :
 Such first-sight friendships are not made to wear.

Trust not the waves ! Beware of serpents' eyes,
 That fascinate before the reptiles bite.
 The waves at morn will dally with the ship,
 And dash it into fragments ere the night !

THE HUNTER'S DREAM.



H for a scamper on high-mettled mare
Across some game-abounding, boundless plain
Of sunlit Africa, where countless herds
Woo the keen hunter—woo him not in vain !

With dawn's first streak, I'd boot, and spur, and mount,
To fly like whirlwind, or like lightning's flame,
After a myriad nijlghaus, antelopes,
Springboks, and deer. These, these are glorious game !

The sun is hot, and what a tangled crowd*
Of zebras, quaggas, elands, fly apace,
Ten thousand strong, at sound of horse's hoofs,
All panting to escape my "*Chevy Chase* !"

I look afield, my eye is dazzled sore—
I see a bounding, vaulting, leaping throng
Of scuffling, frightened, nimble-footed beasts,
As densely packed as the campaign is long !

My snorting mare requires no whip or spur ;
She tears along in eager, wild pursuit,
Till, within range, I raise my piece and fire.
The bullet speeds—down falls an antlered brute !

Beside a sparkling stream, I tired dismount,
To sup on venison by my rifle slain ;
The red-hot sun goes down, beneath the rocks
And vulture-nested cliffs of Atlas' chain.

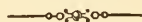
The August moon rides high. Across the plain
Long, weird, dark shadows stretch out miles away ;
But, far afield, I hear hyænas laugh,
And see them prowling for their loathsome prey.

* See Gordon Cumming.

But hist! My clever mare pricks up her ears,
And fidgets to and fro, and trembles sore!
Is it the night-jar, or the screech-owl's hoot?—
I hear it now—it is the lion's roar!


Through "wait-a-bits"* and prickly pears I peer—
A hundred yards away, upon the brink
Of the cool rivulet, I spy three forms;
I know they're thirsty lions come to drink!

I lie down flat, and take a deadly aim:
The barrels of my rifle go "crick!—crack!"
The lions all make for me! But—Good luck—
I wake in bed at home, but—on my back!



A TALE OF A TIGER.



 WAS on the river Irawaddy—
The evening sun was setting fast,
The cool breeze waved the fields of paddy,
And shook the bamboos, as it passed!

It was a charming vaccine station—
The grass grew generously fine;
And here a perfect bovine nation
Reposed in peace, and loved to dine.

Remote from mortal din and bustle,
Who would have dreamt of danger nigh?
Or thought the bushes' pleasant rustle
Was caused by tiger sneaking by?

Yet in the grass a tiger lurking,
In blissful expectation purred,
Resolved to try his hand at burking
One of the calm, unconscious herd!

* "Wait-a-bits" are an impenetrable kind of thorn-bush that tears everything in pieces that tries to pass through it.

In still enjoyment grazed the oxen,
Dotting the peaceful meadow land ;
No beacon fire nor warning tocsin
Proclaimed the spoiler close at hand !

Sleek bulls with comely heifers rambled,
And lowed bucolic ditties loud ;
Slim calves with quaint contortions gambolled,
And frisked among the sweet-breath'd crowd !

The tiger, by the reeds protected,
Lay quiet till the oxen passed,
Then from the herd a bull selected,
And in a moment held him fast !

He did not spring upon his victim,
Nor, as his wont, his throat assail ;
Loud roared the bull, and frantic kicked him,
The tiger had him by the tail !

Fast by the tail the brute had grabbed him,
And held on to it like grim death ;
The bull believed some fiend had nabbed him,
And roared and plunged till out of breath !

A real drawback, passing serious,
Poor *Taurus* found the tiger's grip ;
Detained by circumstance imperious,
He could not give his foe the slip !

His enemy from imputations
Was free of feeling pity's pangs,
But muttered frightful imprecations
Between his close-set, vice-like fangs.

Poor bull ! His comrades heard him bellow,
At once formed up in close array,
And charging down, the black and yellow
Brigand was quickly brought to bay !

With savage snorts, and vengeful trample
 They swept the tiger like a storm,
 And made a terrible example
 Of his once slim and graceful form !

Awhile with wrathful foreheads kneading,
 And cruel horns his limbs they tear ;
 And then, a shapeless mass and bleeding,
 They toss him spinning in the air.

See here a wholesome illustration,
 Ye tyrants who delight in wrong—
 The tiger's fate gives demonstration,
 How union may defeat the strong !



THE LION AND THE BOAR.



HUNGRY lion prowled one night
 In search of prey. His appetite
 Was savagely rapacious ;
 And quite prepared he was to kill
 Or man or beast, and thus to fill
 His fasting maw capacious.

Long time he searched the wood and plain
 In search of food, but all in vain,
 And roared with famine frantic ;
 Until at last he chanced to see,
 Sharpening his tusks against a tree,
 A boar of size gigantic !

Each other long they eyed askance,
 Nor cared to make the first advance,
 Or join the dreadful battle ;
 Unused to lions was the boar,
 Nor tusks had Leo braved before,
 But only murdered cattle.

At length the crafty lion feigned
To lay him down, and quite disdained
A mockery so idle—
When, bristling for the coming brush,
The boar charged down with whirlwind rush,
And fury suicidal !

The nimble lion dodged him well,
And as the panting Ape^r fell,
He seized his throat like lightning.
“Assuredly,” ’twas said by all,
“’Twill be a case of *sus. per coll.*,
“The lion’s fangs are tightening !”

Yet showed the swine undaunted front—
Conscious of strength he bore the brunt,
In humour grimly sportive.
With a huge shake himself released,
And quickly showed the kingly beast
His onslaught was abortive.

Now came the turn of Master Pig—
He gave his foe a slashing dig,
His tawny withers baring ;
Withdrew a space across the plain,
Then charging down with might and main,
Closed in with savage daring !

This time the lion’s flank he ripped—
His ribs from shoulder blade he stripped,
With dreadful furrows scoring !
Nor idle were King Leo’s jaws—
He snapped, and bit and plied his claws,
With peals of frantic roaring !

Again they close—again they part,
Mad with their wounds’ terrific smart,
And fight, with fury trembling ;
Then pause once more for lack of breath,
And then resume the work of death,
In rage their pains dissembling.

The dust was laid. The grass was dyed
With crimson streams on either side,
The field of battle painting.
Although the boar was scratched and torn,
He eyed his panting foe with scorn,
Nor either thought of fainting !

When famished lion meets with boar,
Then comes the real tug of war !
Well matched in thew and sinew,
Both giants are but flesh and blood,
'Twere vain to think such conflict could
For evermore continue !


Again the lion drew apart,
And then at Ape made a dart
With all his strength collected ;
He overshot his mark and fell—
The wary boar rushed in pell-mell,
And gored him unprotected !

He smote the lion back and front,
His gleaming tusks, with vengeful grunt,
He in his body buried ;
And when the lion gained his feet,
With baffled rage and footsteps fleet,
He from the carnage hurried !

With tail erect, and conscious snort,
The boar surveyed the scene of sport,
And on his laurels rested.

The lion swore, " When next I see
" So great a bore, I'll let him be
" Unchallenged, unmolested ! "

THE SYCE AND THE TIGER.

HE Saheb bid me take his horse,
While yet the leaves were wet with dew,
And trot him up and down the road
For exercise, as syces do.

The banners grey of parting night
Were waving in the drowsy west,
The weary horses of the sun
Stood still in ocean's caves at rest.

The highroad through a jungle ran,
A sluggish wind the brushwood stirred,
And clammy coils of ragged mist
The feeble light of daybreak blurred.

The muffled crow of jungle cocks
Struck feebly on the torpid air,
With straggling cries of beasts of prey
Retreating to their several lair.

Long time we saw no living thing,
Save wriggling snake, or hobbling toad ;
Or, now and then, a slinking fox,
Or jackal sneaked across the road.

At last the tardy daylight broke,
With crimson fires the Orient burned,
And as the flaming sun arose,
Fatigued our steps we homeward turned.

Their matin prayers, in beads of dew,
The flowers with grateful fragrance told ;
The waking birds, from every spray,
Their chorused songs of worship trolled.

With ears erect, and nostrils spread,
The horse snuffed in the morning air ;
With arching neck, and step elate,
He seemed the general joy to share !

The road on either side was fringed,
With aloe, cane, and waving reed,
Luxuriant tufts of giant grass
O'ertopped the heads of man and steed.

Thus, as we homeward trotted on,
I mused upon the prospect sweet ;
When, o'er the bush, a tiger springs,
And lights before us on his feet !

Astonishment our senses tied,
Together brought in strange pell-mell ;
We looked into each other's eyes,
But what to do we could not tell !

The horse stopped short with hoof upraised,
And trembling at the tiger stared ;
The puzzled tiger in return,
Irresolutely blinking glared !

Impulsively I raised my whip,
And whirled aloft its hissing lash ;
The tiger nimbly dodged the blow,
And whipped away like lightning's flash !

To see the monster turn his tail
Both man and horse rejoiced full well !
When face to face, I little thought
I should survive the tale to tell !

"TAKING THE CHAIR AT A MORNING MEETING."



HE morning sun is hot and high,
And fiercely from the glowing sky
The cruel sunbeam swoops !
The panting fields are white with heat,
And slowly through the village street
March past the languid troops.

Right glad to leave the hot parade,
And gain the barrack's welcome shade,
The rank and file retreat ;
Nor yet the officers are slow
To seek, in well-thatched bungalow,
A shelter from the heat.

Ye denizens of tempered zone,
Where tropic heats are all unknown,
Can never feel the zest,
When red-hot the sirocco blows,
And every breath like furnace glows,
Of India's noontide rest !

Upon the day of which I speak,
Two officers retired to seek
Repose, a bath, and tiffin ;
One of these gentlemen I'll call,
For sake of metre, Ensign Paul,
The other Captain Griffin.

The house, enclosed by wide compound,
With stately trees was girdled round,
And cooled by rippling fountains ;
Whilst far across the sunburnt plain,
Uprose the giant snow-capped chain
Of Himalaya mountains.

A spacious hall with open door,
And lozenge-chequered marble floor,
 Into the mansion led ;
And, on a gilded table placed,
A vase of fresh-cut flowers graced
 The hall, and sweetness shed.

As through the hall our heroes passed,
They looks of glad approval cast
 Upon the welcome sight ;
The snowy cloth was covered o'er
With meats and drinks, a goodly store,
 To tempt the appetite.

Besides, a heap of letters lay
To greet the officers that day ;
 The English mail was in !
And both alike, without a word,
Whilst still encumbered with his sword,
 To break the seals begin.

And as each envelope they scanned,
And turned it round with trembling hand,
 In fancy's magic glass
Familiar forms from distant climes,
Familiar scenes from bygone times
 In quaint procession pass !

One letter told of dear ones dead—
Another speaks of sisters wed,
 Of brothers gone to Eton ;
How Robert liked his living new,
And how for once the Oxford crew
 Were by the Cambridge beaten !

By thoughts of absent friends engrossed,
They quite forgot the tea and toast,
 The hissing urn grew mute ;
Unnoticed many a tempting dish
Lay on the board, of meat and fish,
 With piles of luscious fruit.

Thus musingly they stood and thought
Upon the news the mails had brought,
 When, in the outer hall,
A sound was heard of footsteps fleet,
A muffled tread of padded feet,
 Preceded by a fall !

The Captain, turning round, espied
A leopard, with gigantic stride
 Come trotting up the street,
Whilst, by the table overset,
And scattered flowers, another yet
 Reared on his hinder feet !

His half-read sheet, as quick as thought,
He flung upon the floor, and caught
 A handy wooden chair ;
Which, as the savage monster closed,
By sleight of hand he interposed
 Between them then and there !

And now began a dreadful war.
The baffled brute, with wild uproar,
 The officer assails.
The man was cool—the beast was hot,
And in his haste to reach him, got
 His head between the rails !

The Captain jerked his nimble wrist,
And gave the chair a sudden twist,
 And fixed him doubly tight.
The leopard, thus at arm's length held,
On tiptoe danced about, and yelled
 With disappointed spite !

The more he tried to extricate
His head, the Captain leant his weight
 Upon the sturdy chair—
Until at last he forced him down
Half-strangled, on the marble stone
 And knelt upon him there !

With frantic screams he strove to rise ;
 The servants heard his choking cries,
 And ran to help their lord.
 The Ensign could not lend his aid,
 For he the other brute essayed
 To frighten with his sword.

With sabres, sticks, with forks and guns,
 The swarthy, turbaned *posse* runs,
 And all fall on combined—
 With shot and stab, with cut and thwack,
 They ply the brute's devoted back
 Till he the ghost resigned !

Scared by so horrible a fray,
 The other leopard did not stay
 To see his partner's fate ;
 Awed by the ensign's glittering blade,
 A speedy exodus he made
 Out through the garden gate !

Brave Griffin now his hold released,
 And smiling scanned the prostrate beast,
 Each pulse with triumph beating ;
 "By Jove," he cried, "I should not care
 "Too soon again to take the chair
 "At such a MORNING MEETING !"



LOVERS' JARS.



OVERS' jars are but the rattle
 Of the pleasing chains they wear,
 And when lad and lass do battle,
 Kisses soon the cuffs repair !

When the fray grows hot and fiery,
 Love boils up in even ratio,
 For 'tis said "*amantium iræ*
"Est amoris integratio!"

So at least the poets tell us,
 And for aught we know they're right ;
 Since they're most likely fellows
 To be learned in love or fight !



ROSE LEAVES.*



HO would not read, if roses could but write
 The secret chronicle of their sweet lives ?
 Hear from their crimson lips what cares can
 blight

Their fragrant bosoms, whence their joy derives ?

Queen of the garden, ENGLAND'S ROYAL ROSE,
 The sunny story of her youth has told ;
 How roses live her written thoughts disclose,
 And how they love we read in words of gold !

No high-flown story, no imperial flights,
 No dark intrigues her chronicle records ;
 But rustic pleasures, innocent delights—
 Guileless endearments writ in loving words !

In artless strains, unconscious of the spell
 Which WOMAN'S sympathies around them cast ;
 With thankful wonder, hear the MONARCH tell
 How all her subjects hailed her, as she passed.

Matchless in grace, but knowing not her power,
 VICTORIA tried to captivate and please—
 Least witting of her charms—the Royal flower,
 With grateful tears, records her victories !

* "*Leaves from the Journal of our Life in the Highlands.*"

Dear MOTHER of our land ! In days of yore *
 I saw a girl uncrowned drive forth to see
 Her coronation pomps, the day before
 The sceptre's heavy weight had fall'n on thee !

The streets were blocked ; thy carriage could not pass ;
 Thy lieges thronged the roads ; but, what a "*cheer*"
 Greeted the "Queen !"—"God bless thee, Royal lass !"
 Widow'd VICTORIA, thou art trebly dear !

VICTORIA, how we love must be untold !—
 Thou art adored wherever England's drum
 Rolls round the globe ; it says in accents bold,
 "The reign of truth and purity has come !"



BANDUSIA'S FOUNT.

HOR. CARM. III. ODE 13.

AD FONTEM BANDUSIÆ.



EAR babbling, bubbling, bustling rill !
 Swift flowing down Bandusia's hill—
 Thy streams are glass—thy glittering spray
 In rainbow radiance leaps away !

Wert thou a god, on altar made
 Of verdant turf, a kid were laid ;
 A dancing lithesome thing like thee,
 Fit emblem of thy jollity !

Its crimson blood should tint thy tides,
 And the sweet juice of grape besides—
 Forget-me-nots, woodbine, and rose
 Aye flourish where thy torrent flows—

* The writer of these lines saw the Queen, on the day before her coronation, in her open carriage, in Parliament Street. She had driven out to see the preparations. The carriage was blocked in by the immense crowds. But her girlish Majesty was recognised, and what a reception she had !

No dogstar's heats, no summer's sun
Spoil thy cool waters as they run ;
The tired steers, the thirsty flocks
Drink, as they bubble from the rocks.

Dear fountain—as in rustic rhymes
I sing thee now, all future times
Shall revel in thy oak trees' shade,
And watch thy streams leap down the glade !



PRINCE LOUIS NAPOLEON.

In Memoriam.

BRING violets, and plant them on his grave !
Fetch the sweet thyme from incense-breathing moors,
That the wild bees may chant his lullaby,
May sing his dirge all the long summer days ;
For bees and violets are emblems of
The House Imperial of the Prince that's gone !
Born to the halo of a Cæsar's crown,
Not in the tented field, or headlong charge,
But in fell ambuscade he was cut off
In the lone wilderness, remote from France,
Far off from England—his adopted home—
Bearing a soldier's help to comrades true
He dared to venture all ; and so he died
A youthful hero in swart Africa,
A martyr to his daring chivalry !
Weep not too sore thy son's untimely end,
Illustrious Widow, doubly thus bereaved !
A threefold cord of sympathy now binds
Thee, gentle lady—Chislehurst's recluse—
To every English heart. Thy direful griefs,
Thy boyish hero, and the mighty dead
Belong to Albion, whose great pulse yet throbs
With agony and pride as she recites
Rorke Drift's defence, and Isandula's slain !

A "TIGER" BEHIND.



CAPTAIN Stone, on the day of his marriage,
 Started a spick and span, brand new carriage ;
 'Twas picked out with black, the body was
 yellow ;

'Twould be hard in India to find its fellow !

The captain's wife was a woman of taste,
 With a queenly sail, and a killing waist ;
 When she first came out at the Government ball,
 She was hailed at once the "belle of Bengal."

Her maiden name was Tabitha Wills ;
 She came of a stock as old as the hills ;
 When she got married to William Stone,
 Wags said, she "loved a Will of her own !"

Captain Stone had claims upon him, he
 Therefore practised a rigid economy,
 And grudged on his carriage to spend a stiver
 Beyond the horses, the syce and the driver.

Tabitha Stone was given to grumbling !
 'Twas a great offence, and occasion of stumbling
 To a girl of her *ton*, and sensitive mind,
 To have neither footman nor tiger behind !

Vainly her husband represented
 The duty and pleasure of being contented ;
 A man less calm, by her constant nagging, she
 Had driven distraught with mental agony !

"William !" she cried, "before you married me,
 "You solemnly swore, that I should carried be
 "In a style becoming my rank and station ;
 "Beware lest you drive me to desperation !

"Tut! tut!" she added, "it's no use talking ;
"I declare to goodness, it's worse than walking !
"Yes, little you care for your wife's position ;
"I wish I had married the Scotch Physician !

"Had ever young wife such aggravation ?
"There is such a thing, Sir, as separation !
"I'll have a tiger by this time to-morrow,
"Or else a divorce *a mensa et thoro* !"

William sat by, serene and stolid,
And his bitter portion in silence swallowed ;
It must be owned he was somewhat worried,
Though he showed no signs of being flurried !

"Madam," he said, as he twirl'd his mustachio
"I have told you before, though temper you may show,
"The state of my means, that we cannot afford
"A 'tiger' just now— and—I won't be bored !"

Tabitha's temper was fairly ruffled ;
She lolled in the carriage, and whimpered and snuffled ;
"You'll see, Sir, my wishes are not to be stifled with
"Your surly demeanour, nor yet to be trifled with !"

I should have stated, the present occasion,
When Tabitha showed such aggravation,
Was when two lady companions were sharing
The carriage drive, on an evening airing.

Had there not been two witnesses present—
Although as it was, it was far from pleasant—
The loving wife might have jumped from her place,
And eagerly scratched her husband's face !

As it was, she could only express her scorn,
By stamping upon his tenderest corn ;
As she could do this, and not stir from her seat,
She elected to "take it out" of his feet !

The breeze was cool—'twas a beautiful night ;
The West glowed red with the sun's last light ;
And flaming aloft, from her silver car,
Waved the luminous torch of the evening star !

From thicket and tope, as they rolled along,
Came floating the peals of the nightingale's song ;
And a wavy glory of fireflies went
And came, with the jessamine's exquisite scent !

The tired parrots were gone to their beds,
And homewards were turned the horses' heads ;
Once and again from the brushwood dark
Came the roaring of beasts, and the jackal's bark !

Tabitha wished herself at home ;
The horses' coats were covered with foam ;
The clattering tramp of their footfalls rang
On the sunburnt roads, with a boding clang !

Little she thought that her wish ungratified
Would be that evening signally ratified,
And that once for all, for the rest of her days,
She'd be cured of her nagging, vixenish ways !

The carriage arrived at a hilly place ;
The straining horses slackened their pace ;
With a terrible roar, and swifter than wind,
From the thicket a tiger jumped up behind !

Oh horror !—One muscular paw he placed
On Tabitha's shoulder, and one round her waist ;
With speechless amazement—too frightened to shriek,
She felt his whiskers tickling her cheek !

Mute and appealing her William she eyed ;
No longer to kick at his shinbones she tried ;
From her forehead had vanished the look of scorn,
And she quite forgot to tread on his corn !

Feeling the tiger's horrible breath
On her face, she gave herself up to death ;
By anticipation, she felt the pangs
Of his cruel, crunching, ivory fangs !

Merciful ever, as well as brave,
No look of derision her husband gave ;
Though perfectly cool, he was not inclined
Just then to pun on the " tiger behind."

With his doubled fists, and his sturdy cane,
He battered the tiger, might and main,
And the rearing steeds, with a sudden lurch,
Shook the monster down from his slippery perch !

Prone in the dust fell the growling beast—
Tabitha felt herself released !
Too frightened before to utter complaint,
She now at the least had leisure to faint !

At a furious gallop, the horses bore
Their swooning load to the Captain's door ;
Unconscious the lady was carried upstairs,
Minus her wilful, spitfire airs !

Submission thenceforth was a chief ingredient
In the wedded life of that wife obedient ;
From that day forward she firmly declined
The coveted pomp of a " tiger behind !"



NIGHTFALL.



IGHTFALL spreads her holy calm
O'er a tired world. The plains
Pant no more. The setting sun
Spake not false of genial rains !

NIGHTFALL !—Countless anxious men
Hail thee, soother of their cares ;
Myriads, on their beds of pain,
Dread thee, and thy fevered scares.

NIGHTFALL !—How the invalid,
Tossing to and fro for ease,
Hearkens to the soughing wind
Wailing ghostlike through the trees !

NIGHTFALL !—How the hours he counts,
Listening to the crowing cocks,
Watching till again the sun
Healing's hopeful gates unlocks !



THE LION AND THE EAGLE.

AN ABYSSINIAN ALLEGORY.



LION sent some whelps abroad
Far distant lands to see ;
And bid them cultivate with all
The kindest amity.

The travellers, in their wanderings came
To Abyssinia wild ;
Its royal Eagle for a while
Upon the strangers smiled.

In course of time, a scoundrel Wolf*
The grateful whelps maligned,
And told the jealous bird that they
To take his lands designed !

The Eagle heard the wicked tale
With cries of vengeful zest,
And fell like thunderbolt upon
Each unsuspecting guest.

* A rascally Frenchman was their traducer.

With mighty wings he sorely beat,
With beak and talons mauled
The unresisting guests, and then
Up to his eyrie hauled !

In durance vile, four years he kept,
His captives closely chained ;
The envoys which the Lion sent
To free them he detained.

The Lion hitherto had borne
The outrage patiently ;
He could not brook this last affront
With equanimity !

He chose him out a goodly band
Of valiant beasts of war,
And bid them set their brethren free,
Or else return no more !

To Abyssinia straight they went,
To seek the Eagle's rock ;
Once at its base, they set them down,
And for admittance knock !

The Eagle from his precipice
A shrill defiance screamed ;
That lions such a dizzy height
Should scale, he little dreamed.

Oh, foolish Bird !—With gleeful roar
From rock to rock they leap ;
And, with a mighty spring, alight
Within the castle keep !

The Eagle soon is rent in twain,
The captive whelps set free ;
The lions wag their tails, and set
Off home complacently !

WOMAN'S TACT.



HE potent leverage of loving tact
Lifts mountains, where a fuming Titan fails !
The winsome hand of coaxing gentleness
Unravels knots which giants dare not cut—
And this is how weak Woman rules the world.
She steers the ship with quick, observant eye.
Her intuition sees the brewing storm,
Whilst yet the sea is calm, the sky serene ;
Ere faintest mists the fair horizon dim.
Thus, when the tempest breaks it daunts her not—
Her nimble wit is equal to each wave ;
She takes their measure as they forward leap,
And, with a skilful touch, evades their stroke—
Not till the danger's past, nor always then,
Does she admit how sorely tasked she was.
Oh, admirable gift of self-control !
Woman prevails where Cæsars miss their mark.
She can divert man's peevish waywardness—
Her loving smile can win him from despair,
And set him forward on the road to fame,
When, baffled, foiled, undone, sore tempest-tossed,
He folds his arms, and gives up all for lost !

THE END.

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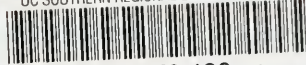
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